



Effigies Auctoris.

James Smith, Sculpsit

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SERAPHICK LOVE

Tender'd to the

Immortal SOUL:

OR, THE

SIXTH GIFT

OF

THEOPHILUS PHILANTHROPOS,
Student in PHYSICK.

*Object not (Reader) 'gainst the Title-Page,
Turn o'er the Leaves, observe, if you be sage:*

*From whence you may find,
If you have a Mind,*

*True LOVE tender'd to your Immortal SOUL;
Which from the Guilt of Sin will make you Whole;
And from this Vale of Woe and Misery,
Safely convey you to Eternity.*

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life, and they are they which testify of me. Blessed is the Man that doth meditate good Things in Wildom; and that reasoneth of holy Things by his Understanding: Whoso is Wise will ponder these Things, and they shall understand the loving Kindness of the Lord. S. *John* v. 39. *Eccles.* xiv. 20. *Psal.* cvii. 43.

Deo initium, progressum, & exitum refer.

The FOURTH EDITION, Corrected and Improv'd.

L O N D O N :

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TO THE
HONOURABLE SOCIETY

O F

Reformation of *MANNERS*.

CHRISTIAN MONITORS;

IT is with more Readiness and Chearfulness that I willingly exhibit this Book to the Publick, as being afforded so happy an Opportunity of ushering it Abroad with a Dedication so suitable to its Subject, and my Intention herein: I mean, That there is such a Society to address myself to, whose Title denotes a tender Regard for the Honour of God and Promotion of Piety; which is the only Thing I aim at by this Publication: And with so much the more Pleasure, *worthy Gentlemen*, do I mention your Society, by how much the more laudable and expedient such Endeavours are in these unhappy Days, *wherein the Measure of Iniquity is almost come to the Full*. We can't but with inexpressible Sorrow behold the great Predominancy of Vice, and how very difficult it is to persuade Mankind to be Happy; neither could we scarce think it credible, were it not evident, that Human Nature should be so strongly bent upon its own Ruin, as being so directly contrary to its natural Inclination and End of Creation. It is natural for us to desire Happiness, but alas! we will be our own Chusers, and that it is that brings us to Destruction; we reject the Paths of God, and will not obey his Counsel, and hence it is, we become of all Creatures the most Miserable: To be instrumental therefore in reclaiming a Sinner from the Error of his Ways, is worthy the Concern of the greatest Monarch; and which, as it is of all other Things the most Noble, so is it also the most difficult; Men will hardly be persuaded to forsake their Sins by Counsel, and the Mind, if it will not be led, it cannot be forced to the Love of Piety; it may indeed be restrained from Vice, yet cannot be compelled to embrace Virtue: The chief Difficulty therefore consists in making a Sinner sensible that he is in an Error, and the Danger attending it, if persisted in. He

is very unwilling to hear of Mortification and the Necessity of parting with his darling Vices; *this*, in his Opinion, is to deprive him of all the Pleasures of Life, which solely consists in the Gratification of his sensual Appetites, which he is very unwillingly persuaded to part with, for the Sake of Others which are not so sensibly perceived by the outward Senses. Hence the wiser and more crafty Reprobates, or Philosophers in Sensuality, are induced to cavil at Religion, and declare against its Necessity, by denying a future Reckoning or the Immortality of the Soul; *than which*, there is nothing more absurd and injurious to believe. But upon what Foundation is this Hypothesis built? Verily, upon *Impudence* and *Presumption*; they will not believe it; Why? Because they can't comprehend it: But the Truth is, they will not believe it, because they are unwilling to forsake their Sins. Whether we shall more properly call these Objects of Compassion or Censure, I wot not; certain I am, they are the worst of Enemies to their own Souls, and ought carefully to be shunned by others: Would it be of Service to them to shew the Absurdity of what they boldly affirm, it might easily be done, provided Reason and Prudence may be admitted to judge of Things prudent or imprudent, proper or improper, which, if they deny, it would be in vain to reason with Fools or Madmen, about Things necessary or unnecessary, lawful or unlawful. I say then, That Religion denies no one the Pleasures of Life; but whatsoever it prohibits, is prejudicial to Human Nature, and condemned by Reason and Prudence: And now, where I pray you, is the Injury of Religion? What Happiness therefore does the Reprobate gain to himself, by despising Religion? Yea rather, what Misery and Sorrow does he not procure? He becomes a Slave to his own corrupt Passions, which is the worst of Drudgery; and loses the true Happiness of whatsoever Things he enjoys, by expecting to find more Pleasure and Satisfaction in them than they can afford: He is daily tossed about from Place to Place as his evil Inclinations leads him, and always disappointed in his Hopes, which adds new Torment to his Sorrow; *He is like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest, whose Waters cast out Mire and Dirt; there is no Peace*, saith my God, *to the Wicked*: Nothing answers his Expectation, neither could the whole World make him Happy, any more than it can his Master, *Satan*, whom he serves. I ask therefore once more: What does a Person gain by being an *Infidel*? Or, what does he lose by being a Believer? Since he is hereby deprived of nothing but what Reason and Discretion prohibits, and enjoys the true Pleasures of Life, by considering what is to be expected from them, and how they are to be us'd: I would rather say therefore; What does a Person not gain by being a *Christian*? And what does he not lose by being an *Atheist*? The One looks for a State of Immortality Hereafter, where, *if there be one*, he shall live and rejoice for ever; but if there be none; yet if he don't receive considerable Joy, even from the very Hope of such a State, which it has a natural Tendency to cause, at least, he has lost nothing by believing it, and living correspondent thereto; but the Other, *I mean the Atheist*, has no Hope beyond the Grave; an Eternal *Annihilation* is his Dependance; in which, if he should be deceiv'd, alas! he is lost and undone for ever; Eternal Misery is his Portion, and Everlasting Torments the Reward of his Infidelity: Therefore, upon a bare Supposition of an Existence Hereafter, and future Rewards and Punishments, as the different Portions of the Righteous and the Wicked; Reason and Prudence would require us always so to live, as to prepare for the One, and provide against the Other; and the bare Probability or Possibility of these Things, is a sufficient Argument hereto. Therefore,

*If there be a Heaven, it is worthy to be sought;
But if none, yet Heaven is a pleasing Thought:*

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The DEDICATION.

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*While Hell with Horror our Minds doth fill,
How we with Care from thence may be preserv'd still.*

Thus we see the great Folly and Danger of rejecting and despising Religion; which also has a natural Tendency to make Men rebellious and disobedient to the Laws of the Land: For, from whence proceeds the vile and most odious Custom of Profane Swearing and Cursing, most shocking to be heard, so very common in these Days, but from a Contempt of the Law prohibiting it? So likewise, the Custom of selling *Mackarel* upon the Sabbath, how vilely is the Sacred Day thereby abus'd! for can we suppose that it was ever intended by Christianity, that Necessity should be pleaded to countenance this Vice, whereby the Lord's Day is most shamefully profaned by the carrying and crying Fish about upon the same, as the Manner now is; Disturbing the Congregation in Time of Divine Service and Sermon, both Morning and Afternoon, with their Bawling and Noise, *as I myself have heard them!* Surely, this is a very gross Abuse of Christianity, and no less a Profanation of the Sabbath, and therefore most justly deserves to be duly punished: What Disposition can we suppose, they must have to Piety or Obedience to God's Commands *in keeping the Sabbath Holy*, while their Thoughts is wholly taken up about *Buying and Selling? Profit and Gain?* A Practice this, horrible to be thought upon in a Christian Country; That the Sabbath should be made a Market Day to Sell and get Gain! *This is indeed to labour for the Meat which perisheth, at the Expence of losing that which is Eternal.* Neither do I think their Crime to be much inferior who encourage them by their Custom, to go on in their Practice, which otherwise would be prevented, because, *were there no Buyers, there could be no Sellers:* O wretched Minds of Human Nature, no Wickedness is so great, but meets with Encouragement! and by having a little Indulgence given it, presently degenerates into Abuse, and increases to a grievous Crime: Neither is there any Comparison between the Necessity of crying *Mackarel* about upon the Sabbath and *Milk*, *as some have objected:* Mercy to the Brute Beasts requires that they should be milk'd, and Human Necessity commands it, *for Babes must be fed with Milk:* But in what Respect does Fish serve to this Purpose? Can't the Want of it be endured for one Day at least? How then is it for almost the whole Year? But if the Necessity thereof must needs be pleaded for, from antient Custom (impious enough indeed!) yet how is it that the Morning is not thought sufficient hereto, as intended by the original Design of that Custom; why is the whole Day employ'd herein? Neglecting their Church and Duty to God, directly contrary to all Reverence and Regard to the Law of God, and to the great Scandal of Christianity: But the true Cause of this Sin, as well as Others so much abounding among us, proceeds from a Want of Piety, or a due Sense of our Duty to God: Christianity has lost its Spirit and Vigour, and scarcely any One sufficiently seeks to defend her Cause against the Enemy; which is an Unhappiness that can't be too much lamented. Should we take a comparative View of the Primitive Age of Christianity with our own; Good God! what an amazing Alteration should we find! Christianity then consisted in Practice, but now in Precept, or rather in Name: They had the Power of Godliness, but we the Shadow: Theirs was Practical, Ours is Speculative: Surely then, it is not without just Reason that our *Church* wishes, That the ancient Discipline and Piety might be restored her again, when Christianity appeared in its due Lustre; of which let us here take a summary View, and we shall be the better able to judge how far we are fallen from the Piety once practis'd by the Saints: Their greatest Care, I mean, the Primitive Christians, was, *To fear God, and keep his Command-*

ments.

ments : Holiness was their Ornament, and the Love of Virtue their Crown of Rejoycing : They were like People that had their Portion in Heaven, and thither their Thoughts were continually bent : Their Pomp lay all in Piety, and their Bravery, in making their Souls rich in Faith, and beautiful in good Works : They thought, That where so much Cost, Time, and Pains was bestowed upon the outward Man, the Inward was in Danger of being too much neglected ; therefore their chief Care was to provide the Cloathing of Holiness for their Souls ; and Men were esteemed Great in Proportion to their Improvement in Piety and good Works : This present Life was the least Thing they minded, while Eternity and future Happiness was continually in their View ; yet not negligent of Industry, they were always ready to Communicate to Others of the Profit of their Labours : Their Words were few, yet expressive of many Things, and their Thoughts were Noble and Great : Heaven was the Subject of their Meditation, and how to obtain a Crown of Glory, their chief Delight : The Name, *Christian*, was always charming to them ; and in this lovely Title, all their Distinctions and Degrees of Honour were levelled : Christ was All in All to them, and that they were Christians, was that wherein they triumph'd above all other Dignities whatsoever : O ! how were they delighted beyond Expression, at the glorious Name, *the Name of the Crucified Jesus* ! His Sufferings and Death raised their Souls beyond the Bounds of this World, and filled them with unspeakable Love and Admiration : His Passion and Crucifixion, was their astonishing Amazement, and how to copy after his noble Example, was their principal Care and Diligence ; by this, they learn'd to despise the World, with the vain Pomp and Glory thereof, and counted all Things but Dross and Dung for the excellent Knowledge of Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified. Death was a pleasing Subject to them, they esteemed it as a kind Companion that would release them out of Prison, and set them at Rest : Nothing pleased them better, than the Thoughts of leaving this World, as being to them the Beginning of Eternal Joy : The Holy Sacrament they daily receiv'd, as the principal Food to nourish them up to immortal Life : The Sabbaths they observ'd with all Reverence according to the Commandment ; and their Meals were mixt with heavenly Discourses, about the Supper of the Lamb which taketh away the Sins of the World, longing after that glorious Day, when they should eat Bread in the Kingdom of God : O happy Time ! when they should enter into the Society of the Bless'd, and sing eternal Hallelujahs to the King immortal ! The Afflictions of this World, they bore with all Patience and Cheerfulness, and the more greivous they were, so much the greater was their Hope that they would prove Messengers of Peace to them, by hastening them forward in their Journey to the heavenly *Jerusalem* : The more they were persecuted, the greater was their Joy, 'tis hastening so much the faster to their Crown of Glory and Haven of eternal Rest. Their Hospitality was loving and kind towards all, and a Christian Stranger they always esteemed as a Brother ; who, altho' they had never seen before, yet they presently knew him to be of their Society and one of their Brethren in the Lord, this appear'd by Reason of his Behaviour and Carriage, his Aspect and Demeanor, which bespeak something Noble and Divine to be in his Mind. Thus they lived, so as always to be prepared for Death, and ready to lay down their Lives for their Master's Honour : When Necessity required, they hastened with Meekness and Joy to the Place of their Martyrdom, and without expressing any Impatience or Fear, readily submitted themselves into the Hands of their Executioners ; testifying their inward Tranquillity, by their Visage and Smiles of their Countenance ; with Eyes lifted up towards Heaven, viewing there by Faith, the Glory they were hastening

hastening to enjoy ; thus they delivered up their Souls to God, with Prayers for their Murderers. If any were imprisoned for Christ's Sake, they never wanted the Assistance of others, or consolatory Advice, to relieve and comfort them in their Distress, and strengthen their Faith and Confidence in God : No Place or Dungeon, how dark or loathsome soever, could restrain their Congression or Coming to them ; and being come, O ! how sweetly did they Comfort them under their Affliction, and cheer them in their Distress ! Their Discourse was all Consolatory and Divine : Heaven was their Subject ; Christ and his Sufferings their Meditation ; and eternal Joy, the Treasure they encouraged each other patiently to wait for : Psalms and Hymns, were their Songs of Mirth ; and the Celebration of the of the Holy *Eucharist*, the Tokens of their Love and Unanimity : Thus they comforted and strengthened the Afflicted against human Frailey, and made them more willingly embrace Death than the Offers of Life : Poverty, how much soever the Fears of it oppress'd others, driving them to Disperation and Destruction, nothing concern'd them ; they were not solicitious about the Things of this World, but had learn'd to be content in any Station of Life, and well knew by Experience, *That Man liv'd not by Bread alone, but by the Power of God* : They considered that they had no continuing City here ; but sought One to come, eternal in the Heavens ; there it was they laid up all their Treasure, well knowing, *That they should reap the Fruits thereof in due Season* : To be solicitious about laying up much Goods for many Years in this World, they thought was very unbecoming a Christian, who is commanded by the Lord of Life, *to set his Affections on Things Above, not on Things on the Earth* ; and that Man's Life consisteth not in the Abundance of the Things of this World, *But having Food and Raiment, we should be therewith Content ; and take up our Cross, and follow Christ* : They were willing to forsake all for his Sake, having Regard to the Promise of obtaining far greater Riches, than any this World could afford : Thus was their Care to provide for Futurity, while they esteem'd this World as an Inn, wherein there Continuance would be but as it were for a Moment in Respect to the Eternity they long'd after : They esteem'd gaudy and pompous Apparel, as utterly Unnecessary ; and abhorred using many adventitious Ornaments, as *Patching, Painting*, and the like ; which they esteem'd greatly sinful, as accusing God of Imperfection in his Workmanship ; We are not, *says Tertullian*, " To seek after Nearness and Finery " beyond what is simple and sufficient, and what pleases God : " And, *says St. Cyprian*, " To be over Neat, is to reform what God has formed ; and to disfigure that Body which he has made after his own Image : " That such has Cause to Fear, least at the dreadful Day of Judgment, God should reject them for being discontented with his Workmanship, and divide them their Portion with *Satan*, whose evil Spirit, *the Spirit of Pride*, they have hearkened to, in being over trim and neat, and seeking to make themselves more beautiful by *Painting and Patching, &c.* than they naturally were : They thought it was mostly becoming Christians to be content with what God in his infinite Wisdom thought proper to give them, and not study to invent an adulterate Beauty, which even to chaste Persons, oft-times proves a destructive Snare : Therefore, *Tertullian*, advises, " That Christians should cloath themselves with the Silks of Honesty, " the *fine Vestures* of Piety, and the *Purple* of Modesty ; " for these are the Ornaments which are truly beautiful, and renders a Person acceptable in the Eyes of God. They were careful about nothing more than how to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man ; their Beauty consisted in the Virtues of the Mind ; a meek and quiet Spirit, they knew, *was of great Prize in the Sight*

Sight of God. They carefully avoided whatsoever might infuse Vanity into their Minds, or damp their Zeal to Religion: Decency was their Rule; Modesty, the Standard of their Behaviour; and how to improve in Holiness, and make themselves fit for the Wedding of the Lamb, was their chiefest Care and Diligence: Without first approaching God, they attempted nothing; well knowing that whatsoever they undertook could not prosper without his Blessing: They dispis'd the Contempt of the World, and rejoiced to suffer Shame and Reproach for Christ's Sake: They valued the Things of the World, no further than as they were necessary for the Conveniencies of human Life, well knowing that *they could not serve God and Mammē*: To be in the World and not of the World, was their *Motto*; and to be other Men than they seem'd to be, was the Thing they chiefly gloried in, *loving the Praise of God, more than the Praise of Men*: The holy Scriptures was their daily Delight, which they so frequently studied, as to transcribe them into their Memories, whereby they had a present Remedy to fly to upon all Occasions; Their greatest Ambition was to exceed each other in Piety and good Works, and strove about nothing more than to make others eternally happy with themselves.

Thus was their Behaviour, thus their Carriage and Deportment, wherewith they amazed the unbelieving World, and stirred up the Fury of *Satan* against them; for no sooner did their Numbers increase, but their Enemies were also increas'd: *Satan* stirs up his uttermost Force, and exasperates the Minds of *Kings* and *Emperors* against them: But, alas! what could the Arm of Flesh do against the Power of God? They feared not those which could only kill the Body, but esteemed it their Duty *to obey God rather than Man*; therefore they despis'd all their Instruments of Cruelty, and the more they were afflicted, even so much the more they increas'd: Their Racks, Flames, Gibbets, Grid-irons, Cauldrons, Boiling Oil, Lyons, Bears, Wild Bulls, or whatsoever else the Malice of *Satan* or the Power of Men could invent to afflict them with, were all insufficient to overcome them, they patiently endured the Pain, and despis'd the Shame, and in all these Things became more than Conquerors through Christ, who loved them: They overcame Death by a Desire of Death, and were more willing to die than their Executioners were to suffer them: And the greater the Effusion of Blood shed by their Deaths, the more Converts it gain'd to *Christianity*; and those who persecuted to Death *Christians* To day, To-morrow became Martyrs to its Faith: *Thus the Blood of the Martyrs became the Seed of the Church*, and with irresistible Force triumph'd over Sin and Death, and so powerfully influenced Mankind to embrace *Christianity*, that in fine, *Kings* and *Emperors* themselves patiently submitted to the Yoke of Christ, and were content to take up their Cross and follow him: Thus *Christianity* prevailed over its Enemies, against Fire and Sword, by no other Weapons than *Constancy, persuasive Arguments, Prayer, and Meekness*: These were its Arms of Defence, and with these it overcame its most invincible Enemies, and spread over the whole World.

Thus, *Gentlemen*, from this short View of Christianity in its proper Lustre, we can't but greatly admire its wonderful *Beauty* and *Excellence*, and the natural Tendency it has to make Life happy, when influenced by its *Precepts*: It requires the Extirpation of *Malice, Injury* and *Ill-nature*, and exhorts that all should live and love as *Brethren*, seeking to promote each other's Happiness and Welfare, as was the Practice of the Primitive Christians, and should be observed by the present Age: But, alas! how are we fallen from the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints! how are we sunk into wretched Carelessness and cold Indifferency in *Christianity*! No one can be unsensible of this, that takes a comparative View of the present, and truly *Christian Age* past: And *Tu*, O *Christian Monitors*, would you again restore it

to its former Lustre? Truly the Enterprize is as noble as it would be beneficial, could it be effected; for *Virtue* brings with it its own *Reward*, and mightily conduces to make Life happy: Proceed therefore with Courage and Perseverance in this Great and Noble Work, wherein much Pains and Diligence is absolutely necessary, which requires you to be more circumspect, and call in to your Assistance all the Helps you can, in order for Success: Mine, *Divine Grace assisting me*, I readily promise shall never be wanting to the uttermost of my Power; and may God grant us Success herein; the Event is dubious, and can't be foreseen by human Foresight, for Men will hardly be persuaded to be happy; and care not for believing this most assured Article of the *Christian Faith*, namely, *That they that have done Good, shall go into Life Everlasting; but they that have done Evil into Everlasting Fire*: They can't conceive it to be consistent with infinite Mercy, to punish a few Years Sinning with Everlasting Torments, forgetting that infinite Justice requires infinite Punishment for infinite Sinning; for such is the impenitent Sinner's Case; he dies at Enmity with God in his Mind, which is very greatly increas'd as soon as the Soul is absent from the Body, by the Torment that immediately seizes it: For even a good Man, when grievously afflicted, is very apt to murmur and complain against God, and instead of repenting for Sins past, to add thereto under Afflictions; how then can the Wicked repent when seized with the horrible Pain of Hell Torments? No, this increases his Enmity with God so much the more, and fills him with Rage, horrible Curses and Blasphemies against the Divine Majesty, and like the *Devil* himself, only wants Power of dethroning him; thus he goes on to Sin *in Infinitum*, and therefore is justly deserving to be punished Eternally: Heaven it self would be a Hell to such a miserable Wretch, because the Happiness of that glorious Place, consists in loving God, and being in his Presence, beholding his wonderful Perfection and Beauty; but what Happiness could this afford such as are at Enmity with him, and is grieved so much the more by being near him? Hence then it naturally follows, that the Punishment of the Wicked must be Eternal, except they could repent in Hell, which is impossible for the Reasons before mentioned, and which indeed is the only thing to be done, and must now be accomplish'd or not at all; a Reconciliation is to be made by a speedy and due Repentance here, between him and his God, before he goes hence and is no more seen: Whilst he is in this World, there may be Hopes; but when he is gone, it will be in vain to call to the Hills and Mountains for Shelter against the Divine Majesty, who shall have none for themselves, when God shall arise to Judgment; and then also, how earnestly soever a Drop of Water may be desired to cool their scorching Tongue, *the sad Instrument, alas! of their Miserable Condition by Lies and Blasphemies*, yet this also shall be deny'd: Their Eyes, so frequently heretofore inflam'd with filthy Lust, will be scorch'd with the Flames of unquenchable Fire to all Eternity: Their Hands and Feet that was wont frequently to run into Evil and shed innocent Blood, shall then be bound in Chains of Darkness, never more to be loos'd again; and every Member of the Body shall be punish'd with inexpressible Pain and Eternal Torments. This is the unhappy Consequence of Sin; this, the hereafter Reward of Lewdness and Debauchery; which even in this World is not without its Marks of Infamy: For, it effeminates the Mind, debilitates the Strength, and makes a Person greatly contemptible, how honourable soever he is in Dignity and Power; while Virtue on the other Hand, has the direct contrary Effect; for it makes the Mind noble and great; the King and Prince immortally beloved; the Rulers and Nobles, renown'd for good Actions; the great Scholar, famous in his Generation; the Tradesman, beloved in his Business, and
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even bestows Honour upon a Beggar, and crowns a Man hereafter with Glory and Immortality : Thus is the Reward of Virtue, and thus the Punishment of Vice : Wherefore, O *Christian Monitors*, let me exhort once more, that we strive with all our Might to reconcile Man to his Eternal Interest, and persuade him to be happy, by forsaking his Sins, and considering those Things which belong unto his Peace : Eternal Misery is of a waking and melancholy Consideration ; and we can't but weep and lament for those who will not be persuaded to mourn for themselves ; and they are truly Objects of our Compassion, who have none for themselves ; let us therefore be daily solicitous to the Throne of Grace for them, that it possible they may be converted from the Error of their Ways and live for ever : How greatly will it turn to their Shame and Confusion, when at the Day of Judgment they hear *Satan* thus expressing himself ; Lord, *Behold these my Servants* ; I was not buffeted, spit upon, scourg'd, and crucified for them as thou wast, and yet they willingly obey'd me, and rejected thee ; therefore they are mine by Right of Choice, and shall remain with me for ever : O therefore, *That they would be wise, seriously reflect upon these Things, and consider their latter End* : Which that you, *Gentlemen*, may be the happy Instruments, under God, of procuring and bringing many to Righteousness and Salvation ; I, the unworthy Servant of the Most High God, shall not cease earnestly to beseech the Almighty to assist and prosper you in your Undertakings : May he bless you with Success, and keep you from all Evil ; may he make his Face to shine upon you, and give you Peace and Prosperity in all Things ; may he lift up his Countenance upon you, and make you happy here, and hereafter to eternal Ages : This, *worthy Gentlemen*, is most earnestly desired and prayed for by your Well-wisher in the Lord, and humble Servant in *Christ*,

PHILOMATHES PHILALETHERS.

The AUTHOR'S PRAYER.

O Immortal God, King Eternal ! the sole Creator of all Things, and Judge of all Men ; who hast made Heaven and Earth by Thy mighty Power and stretched out Arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee ; wonderful art Thou in Thy Works, and infinite in thy Goodness ; without whom to live, is Death, and to die, is Misery and Eternal Woe ; mercifully therefore, hear the Prayer of Thy Servant, O Lord, hearken to my Request, and grant me the Thing that I long for ; Thou knowest my Weakness, that without Thee I can do nothing acceptable in Thy Sight : O therefore, leave me not to mine own Ways, O God I beseech Thee, but let Thy Word be a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Paths ; and so continually direct me by Thy Grace and Holy Spirit, that in all my Thoughts, Words, and Works, I may daily seek to promote Thy Honour, and the Happiness of my Fellow Creatures. I give Thee humble Thanks, O merciful God, for Thy Mercies hitherto bestowed upon me ; beseeching Thee to accept of my Desire of pleasing Thee, and promoting the Good of my Fellow Creatures : Bless my Endeavours already undertaken for this Purpose ; and sanctify them, O Lord I pray

“ pray Thee to their Use and Benefit, and the Promotion of thy Honour:
 “ Grant that they with me, and I with them, may above all Things seek Thy
 “ Honour and Glory, by living according to Thy Commands, who art the Source
 “ and Fountain of all Perfection and Happiness.

“ Thou knowest the Iniquities of this Nation, O Lord, how we have forsaken
 “ Thy Ways, and turned our Feet from Thy Testimonies; therefore are our
 “ Transgressions multiplied upon us, and our Sins testify against us: Yet, O God
 “ Omnipotent, Almighty and most merciful Father, cast us not away from Thy
 “ Favour, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from us: Correct us, but with Mercy;
 “ not in Thine Anger lest Thou bring us to Nothing. We have sinned and done
 “ very wickedly, yea, we have transgress’d more and more: yet, O God, Thou
 “ art our Father, Thou our Protector and Deliverer; Thou sparest when we de-
 “ serve Punishment, and in Judgment remembers Mercy; because Thou knowest
 “ whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but Dust: O spare us still,
 “ gracious Lord God, and according to Thy great Mercy, think Thou upon us
 “ for Good, and give us the Light of Thy Countenance, that we may see our
 “ own Wretchedness, and be made sensible of the dangerous Consequence of our
 “ Sins, which are multiplied against Thee: O therefore, let a due Reflection up-
 “ on the Zeal and Sincerity wherewith past Ages have loved and served Thee, O
 “ Lord, sink deep into our Souls, and produce in us the same good Disposition
 “ towards Thee as was in them, that so, we may no longer continue dead in
 “ our Sins, but live unto Thee, O Lord our God, who art our Father and Author
 “ of our Being: Be merciful unto us therefore, gracious Lord, be merciful unto
 “ Thy People, whom Thou hast redeem’d with Thy most precious Blood, and be
 “ not Angry with us for ever; but turn Thou us, O good Lord, so shall we be
 “ turned, be favourable unto us, and we shall live: Look mercifully upon the
 “ low Estate of Thy Church, and send into our Hearts the Light of Thy Grace,
 “ that we may be cleans’d from all our Pollutions, and serve Thee with a perfect
 “ Mind; so shall we become Thy peculiar People, zealous of good Works.

“ And Thou, O merciful God, who delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner;
 “ but that all should repent and be saved: Graciously hear my Prayer for the whole
 “ Race of Mankind; grant that Thy Ways may be known unto them, thy saving
 “ Health among all Nations: Have Mercy, O Lord, I humbly beseech Thee,
 “ upon all *Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks*, and take from them all Igno-
 “ rance, Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of Thy Word and Commandment,
 “ and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to Thy Flock, that they may be saved
 “ among the Remnant of the true *Israelites*, and be made one Fold under one
 “ Shepherd, *Jesus Christ*, the Righteous: And Thou, O Lord, who art the only
 “ Comforter of the Afflicted, and Physician of the Sick, I beseech thee, look upon
 “ all those who are any Ways afflicted or distressed in Mind, Body, or Estate:
 “ Support the Weak, heal the Sick, relieve the Needy, succour the Oppressed,
 “ bind up the Broken-hearted, speak Peace and Comfort to the dying Penitent,
 “ and Conversion to the Unbeliever; sate Thy Mercies, O Lord, according to
 “ the various Needs or Necessities of us Thy Servants, and grant that these short
 “ Afflictions, may duly effect our Minds towards Thee, to prepare us, thro’ Thy
 “ Grace, for Thy merciful and gracious Reception into Thy heavenly Kingdom,
 “ there to live and be happy with Thee, O God, the Father, Son, and Holy
 “ Ghost, to eternal Ages. *Amen.*

SERAPHICK LOVE, &c.

WHAT sayest thou now, *Reader* ! Hast thou well considered thy most deplorable Condition unto which Sin has for ever doom'd thee ? Can you dwell with everlasting Burnings ? Are you able to endure the endless Flames of unquenchable Fire ? Awakenings Words ! What do they mean ? O Sinner ! Don't you know what they mean ? Thy State is Miserable indeed : What ? Are you such a Stranger to yourself, and ignorant of your own Condition ? Have you lived hitherto like an irrational *Animal* without any Thoughts about Futurity ? It is now then high Time to know thyself, and consider that thou hast an immortal Soul exposed to everlasting Ruin : O ! dreadful Sentence ! Why was it so decreed ? Why ? truly for a Punishment upon Sin. *Know therefore, and consider it well in thine Heart, That in the Beginning God created the Heaven and the Earth :* In the Heaven he placed immortal blest Spirits, Angels of divers Ranks and Orders, to remain with him for ever, upon Condition of their Obedience ; but Rebellion gained Admittance among them, and as many as embrac'd it, were cast into a Lake of eternal Torments, miserable and undone for ever : The Earth also he replenished with great Variety of Workmanship, worthy their great Creator's Wisdom for Beauty and Comeliness ; but the chiefest and most noble of all, was *Man*, whom he created after his own Image, and constituted him Lord over all : Great was his Beauty and Structure, and as great the Perfection of his Happiness ; he was in perfect Unity with the Almighty, and designed for eternal Life without seeing Death : Yet Obedience was required, and *Death* was pro-

nounced upon Transgression of the Covenant, which alas ! lasted not long, but Disobedience was found in him also, and brought Death into Paradise ! The Supreme of the Apostate Angels, now the *Devil*, who had brought Damnation upon himself and Others in Heaven by Rebellion, found Means also of bringing Destruction upon the Earth, and cast that noble Creature, *Man*, out of Paradise : Thus Sin and Death came into the World, bringing Destruction upon the Earth, which leads the Way to everlasting Torments : Since then as you are the Off-spring of the first Sinner, *Adam*, upon whom Death was pronounc'd for Disobedience ; what else can you expect but Death also, *yea*, Death and eternal Damnation ? Now therefore, that the Cause is known why you are thus subject to Misery ; consider, I beseech you, what must be done to avoid it ; surely, to view yourself in a State of Reprobation, is to behold the most miserable Object in the World ; *One, born in Sin, at Enmity with God, and condemn'd to eternal Woe and Misery :* Oh ! unhappy Hour that ever you was born, thus to commence being miserable from the Time you began to live ? What therefore, *I say*, will you do to escape this dreadful Scene of Punishment ? Surely, by this Time, you are sufficiently convinced that your Condition is unspeakably miserable ; except a *Remedy* is provided to deliver you from the impending Ruin ; *but Ah !* Who is sufficient for this Thing ? God is Just, and absolutely requires a *Recompence* for thy Ransom, *yea*, his Justice will not suffer him to pardon thee without ; *but who is able to purchase it for thee ?* Alas ! no Human *Being* can, because all have sinned, and are under the same Condemnation with thyself ;

thyself; and no Angelical Created Being can, as having no inherent Perfection of their own, and therefore none to communicate unto thee: Oh! miserable Wretch that I am, where then shall I turn? Or to whom else can I address myself, to escape this dreadful State of Misery? *Will God have Mercy upon me, who has condemned me?* And who is there besides that can help me? *Peace Sinner, Peace be to thy Soul,* says a Voice from Heaven, *despair no longer;* hearken to Tydings of great Joy: A Recompence is offered and accepted; *Christ*, the Son of God, by pitying thee, has been content to redeem thy Life with his own! the Innocent died for the Guilty; the Son of God for the Sons of Men! He has given you a Token of his Love, and an Earnest of your immortal Happiness, by his Death; and I present you with this, as a Token of mine, for your immortal Soul; beseeching you to embrace the Condition of Life, and live for ever: Gratitude to him obliges me to use my uttermost Endeavours in promoting his Honour; and Love to you, compels me to intreat you to contribute thereto, by your own Endeavours, in observing those Religious Duties upon which that solely depends, and without which, it cannot be obtained.

And *First*. I humbly beseech you to consider your present Condition, and reflect upon yourself as being not your own, but God's; purchased, when lost, by the precious Blood of *Christ* (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) and rendered thereby under the strictest Obligations to seek after the Things of the Lord, rather than to please yourself: O! therefore, let it be your constant Care, to testify the Sense of your Duty and Love towards him, by a strict Regard in the Observance of those Things he requires to be performed by you; and in Order hereto, be careful, *I earnestly intreat you*, by reflecting upon these Things, constantly to attend the Publick Worship of God, according to the Apo-

stle's Exhortation (*Heb. x. 24, 25, 26. 1 Thess. v. 17, 18.*) and let no trifling or frivolous Excuse detain you from it; always remembering that the Care of your immortal Soul as far exceeds all other Considerations, as an eternal Happiness does a momentary Pleasure: Therefore Temporal Affairs must give Place to those that are Spiritual: One Hour in the Day at least, ought surely to be spared for this Purpose; and be well assured, that a wilful Neglect herein, is an Act of Rebellion against that God, who claims this from you, as being your Creator, Lord and Father.

To be industrious in providing for the necessary Conveniences of Human Life, by all honest and lawful Means, is your Duty by Divine Command (*Rom. xii. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 10, 11, 12.*) *Who has made us Tenants of his Tabernacle; and requires us to be careful in preserving it sound and wholesome; which cannot otherways be done, than by a sufficient Use of the Conveniences of Life, and that must be obtained by Labour and Diligence:* But to be so solicitous herein, as to neglect the more weighty Concerns of your Soul's Interest, is to become Criminal, and to cause your Industry to prove your eternal Ruin and Destruction: *For what is a Man profited, though he should gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? Or what can he give in Exchange for his Soul?* The World cannot redeem it, when lost, because it is of greater Value than the World itself, and should therefore, in Proportion, be regarded above all other Things: But supposing a Person should be somewhat a Loser in his worldly Gains, by his attending upon Religion, yet that Loss will be infinitely recompenced to him, *even in this World*, by the Peace and Tranquility of Mind that will always attend him, from the Sense of having performed his Duty: But much more so hereafter, when God shall reward his Obedience, according to his Promise, to those who are diligent in keeping

keeping his Commandments, *without whose Divine Favour, we lose even the true Pleasure of whatsoever we enjoy*: It is God's Grace alone, that crowns our Happiness, and gives us true Content, either in Prosperity or Adversity: This makes a Dunghill as a Throne, and a Prison as a Palace; *There is no Want in the Fear of the Lord*, says the wise Man, *and it needeth not to seek Help*, (Eccles. xl. 26.) Whatsoever our Condition be, if God be with us, we are happy, and nothing can make us miserable, whose Love towards us is not to be estimated by our Condition in this Life, *wherein the Wicked is oftentimes seen to flourish in Prosperity, while the Righteous live in Adversity*; but the Scene will soon be changed, when the Prosperity of the One will end in a miserable Eternity, but the Adversity of the Other in everlasting Joy, (St. Luk. xvi. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, &c.)

Our blessed Saviour means to wean our Affections from this World, and to place our whole Dependance upon him, by exhorting us, *To pray only for daily Bread*, and commanding us, *Principally to seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness before all other Things, and to lay up our Treasure in Heaven*, (St. Matt. vi. 11, 19, 20, 28, 29, 33.) rather than to be so solicitous about the Affairs of this Life, as in the least to let them clash with our immortal Interest: There is nothing more dangerous to the Soul, than an immoderate Desire after Riches, which we are cautioned against by our blessed Lord, (St. Luk. xii. 15.) and the Consequences thereof foretold by St. Paul, *As that which drowns Men in Destruction and Perdition*, (1 Tim. vi. 9.) Nothing therefore is more becoming a Christian, than to speak in Agur's Words, *Remove far from me (O Lord!) Vanity and Lies; give me neither Poverty nor Riches, but feed me with Food convenient for me; lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal, and take the*

Name of my God in vain, (Prov. xxx. 8, 9.)

To deny ourselves some of the carnal Pleasures and Profits of Life, for the Sake of Piety, is every Christian's Duty, and which, tho' at first it be somewhat difficult, as being very contrary to our natural Inclinations, *until the carnal Mind, which delights not in the Things of the Spirit*, becomes spiritualized, *which is a Work of Time and Labour in Piety, thro' Grace*; yet it is absolutely necessary, and Christ himself requires it of us, who has said, *That whosoever loveth any Thing before me, is not worthy of me; and he that takes not up his Cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me*, (St. Matt. x. 37, 38.)

Could the Multiplicity of worldly Business have privileged a Person from an Obligation to Religious Duties, then verily King David and the Prophet Daniel might well have been exempted by it; but so far were they from this Persuasion, as to make Religion their principal Care and Concern, esteeming it the greatest Wisdom, and above all Things to be observ'd, (Psal. xix. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and cxix. 97, 99, 164. Dan. vi. 10.) as having a Respect to the Promise of eternal Inheritance.

To be deficient then herein, is to prefer the Love of the World, before that of God, and to commit Sacrilege against the Divine Majesty, who we know, wants neither Power nor Opportunity to punish Offences of what Nature soever they be.

Secondly. Since such is the Necessity and great Benefit of Religion; take Heed that you deceive not your own Soul, by despising the Commandments of God, and presume not to rob him of that small Portion of Time, which he requires should every Day be set a part for his Service; and no longer plead, That you have not Time for these Things, since the God, in whose Hand thy Breath is, requires them of you, unto whose Divine Will all Things must yield an absolute Obedience, without enquiring

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enquiring the Cause why it should be so; who, if he had required some great Thing of you, ought he not readily to be obeyed? How much more, when he saith, *Call upon me, and be ye saved*: Always remembering, That the Soul can no more subsist without Grace, than the Body can without Food: It is Satan's Policy, who is always at Hand to deceive you, daily to furnish you with Excuses, to detain you from Religious Duties, as well knowing how greatly your Indifferency herein, will tend to the Accomplishment of his End, in procuring your Destruction; beware then of being deceived by him, for he will shew thee no Mercy, if thou givest him the Victory: There is nothing therefore so absolutely necessary, as to have always a due Regard to the Soul's Interest; *This is the Mercy which God requires, and to be careful and troubled about many worldly Things, is the Sacrifice*, which tho' absolutely necessary for the Support of Human Life, is yet inferior to the Former, in Respect to the Excellency of its Consequences, which is eternal Life: And say not thou in thine Heart, *To what Purpose should I serve the Lord, or call upon his Name, since he knows all Things, and needs not to be inform'd of my Necessities?* But remember, That as God has requir'd this from you, even so his Favour can no otherways be obtain'd, than by performing the Conditions upon which it is promised; namely, *That if you'll ask, in Faith, you shall receive: And if you'll seek, in Patience, you shall find*, St. Matt. vii. 7. St. Jam. i. 5, 6.

It is a well known Truth among ourselves, That if a Person thinks it too much to ask for a Favour, he is very deserving to be denied it; and can we suppose that God will accept of less from us, than we expect from each Other? No, verily; for he requires much more, yea, *That we should love him above all Things, even Life itself, when it cannot otherways be enjoy'd but with the Hazard of losing his Favour*, (St. Matt.

x. 37, 39.) Wherefore, of the two Ex-treams, you should rather say, That you have not Time for any Thing else but to serve God, since the Consequence of that so far exceeds all other Things, as being a Provision for the future and everlasting Joy.

Mary was commended by our Lord rather than *Martha*, because she was attentive in hearing his Words; tho' the Other's Employment was doubtless very commendable, as making Provision for the Entertainment of her Lord, (St. Luk. x. 40, 41, 42.)

Thirdly. Let the Consideration of your present Condition, further excite you to a diligent Improvement of your Time. This Life is short and momentary, it is a State of Probation, or rather of Reprieve, and wherein you are exposed to many *Casualties* and sore *Afflictions*, without are Fightings, within are Fears, and with Labour and Sorrow do we attain to any Thing that is valuable, while the Earthly Tabernacle presseth down the Soul which museth upon many Things. We live here as in an Inn, and our Continuance in it is very uncertain: We daily, yea continually, hang over Eternity, as it were by a slender Thread, which is subject to be destroyed by a Thousand Accidents: Therefore, *MEMENTO MORI, Remember to die*, should always be sounding in our Ears, to remind us that we were created for a more noble and lasting Habitation than this World can afford, and are daily hastening thither.

Surely then, to be more solicitous about our present Welfare than our Eternal Happiness, and to hazard the Loss of our Immortal Souls, for the Sake of momentary Pleasure, betrays a Disposition utterly unworthy Human Nature, and is becoming only the Beasts that perish.

Things of the greatest Consequence should always be preferred to the less; but the Soul's Happiness is of the utmost Consequence, why then is it not most regarded?

We can never testify our Love to God better,

better, than by a careful Regard of His Image, the Soul; yet nothing is more common than to neglect this, while the Body and sensual Appetites engrosses all our Time and Care, which yet must suffer with the Soul in whatsoever Condition it shall hereafter be sentenced to, whether Joy or Misery, (S. *Matth.* xxv. 31, 32, 34, 41.)

The Necessity of Business is presently objected by some, against the Duty of attending the Publick Worship of God; while at the same Time, that is no Bar to the Pursuit of their own Diversions; in the Enjoyment of which, being not content with six Days, they presume also to profane the Sabbath through their Intemperance.

Thus crafty is *Satan* to beguile Man of his Salvation, *While he draws him from the Love of Virtue, and makes him forget that he is Mortal, and must shortly give up the Ghost, and render an Account of his Actions.*

And shall we call these Christians! Are these the Servants of God? Yea rather, are they not *Anti-Christians*, while they apostatise from the Faith of Christ, and commit the uttermost Ingratitude against Him who laid down his Life for them? Unto whom, we are so deeply indebted, that it is impossible for us ever to be freed from an Obligation carefully to obey His Will; in that He has loved us with such an exceeding Love, that neither the Tongue of Men nor Angels are able to express it: Which, were it duly considered, one would think it impossible that it should be returned with such horrid Ingratitude.

By which, *Fourthly*, May be observed a further Obligation to Religion, in Obedience to the Commands of Christ, who has done such great Things for us. For suppose a Man to be taken Captive by an Enemy, carried into a Foreign Country, and never more to see his native Home, but forever condemn'd to the Mines or Gallies, and order'd every Day to be stretch'd upon the Rack, and scourg'd with Rods of Iron: Suppose also, That a Person hearing of his deplorable Condition, of-

fers a large Sum for his Ransom, redeems him from his Slavery, and brings him back again to his native Country: Adding moreover to this, a Promise, That upon Condition he be careful to observe his Will, he should in a short Time be adopted for his Son, and made his Heir for ever.

Is it not natural to suppose, That the Joy of this poor Captive, would exceed the bounds of Expression? And that it would be impossible for him to be too submissively Obedient to the Commands of so good and gracious a Benefactor?

The Case then is too much our own: We were taken Captive by *Satan*, and for ever banished from the Hopes of Heaven, the Soul's native Country, and condemned to a State of Eternal Woe and Misery: Christ, the Son of God, pitying our miserable Condition, offered Himself for our Ransom, was Crucified for us, and Redeemed us at the Price of His Blood! (*Good Lord, how He loved us! Was ever Love like thine!*) And has moreover promised, That upon our Obedience to His Commands, we shall in a short Time, be adopted for His Children, and made Heirs of His Kingdom for ever! Wherefore, Christian Reader, see here the Infinite Love of Christ towards you, reflect upon it a-while I beseech you, pass not by it without duly considering it, and well weighing the stupendious Greatness of the Action! That the Eternal Son of God should readily condescend to leave His Father's Bosom, debase Himself of his Glory, descend upon the Earth as a mean Servant; despised and rejected by Men, *A Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*, and at last nail'd to the Cross for our Sakes: Oh! Stupendious Love! An Action beyond Example, and far exceeding the Power of Admiration: Consider it then, I say, and admire it still, and so much the more will you be lost in Amazement.

Now He that gave Life to all, submits to Death Himself! *Yes*, it is finished, *said he*, and the Grave can no longer retain

irs Prisoner: *He is not here, He is risen*; wherefore now again, *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting Doors, that the King of Glory may come in*; that He, *I say*, whom before ye let through, to make Immortal, Mortal; may now again be received into His Kingdom, having conquered Death and the Grave, and purchased Immortality for Mortal Man! And now, it is finish'd indeed! and the eternal Son of God is again re-inflated to His former Glory, there making Intercession for us.

Wherefore now, O Reader, have you well consider'd these Things? And what? Won't you return Love for Love? Will you frustrate the End of such stupendious Love, by continuing still in your Sins? Can you think upon it with dry Eyes and unrelenting Heart? Will you fly from the loving Protection of such a Friend, and refuse His Favours? Oh! Don't, I beseech you, be so unwise to yourself, and so very ungrateful to him, who was content to shed his Blood for your sake: Consider the dreadful Consequences attending it; even, nothing less than eternal Woe and Misery; yea, the Despising of such inimitable Love, will render your Punishment much greater than otherwise it would have been, had He not died.

Observe then, Christ has purchased you by the Price of His Blood, and you are His, (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) whose Commands therefore you are under the strictest Obligation to observe with all Diligence, how contrary soever they be to your own Inclinations or secular Interest: Yourself you may deceive, but Him you cannot; beware therefore, how ye rebel against Him, lest you be excluded from His Friendship, and again delivered into the Power of your Enemy Satan; and then, Good were it for you had you never been born.

Fifthly. Since now you have seen your Obligations to Religion, in Return for the Love of Christ towards you; what remains but that you should shew the Readiness of your Obedience to Him, by diligently attending the Solemnities of

Divine Worship. And here something may be necessary to be observed, concerning the Manner of worshipping God, and how He is most acceptably to be ador'd, to which the Advice of the wise Man is worthy of Recommendation. *My Son*, says he, *when thou comest to serve the Lord, prepare thy Soul for Temptation; and keep thy Foot when thou goest into the House of God and be more ready to bear, than to give the Sacrifice of Fools; for they consider not that they do Evil: Therefore, before thou prayest, prepare thy self; and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.* Such then should be our Behaviour when we are about to enter into the House of God: We must not bring with us a Head full of confused Thoughts, Eyes set upon Wantonness, distorted with Envy, and inflamed with covetous Desires: The Ears deaf to God's Word, itching after Novelty and Vanities: The Tongue blistered with Lies and Slanders, more ready to Backbite than to speak the Truth: The Heart cloven with Hypocrisy, and decayed in the Heat of Lust and Intemperance; The Hands feeble, and soon weary in Well doing: The Stomach over-charged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, nauseating all good Counsel and sober Reproofs: The Knees stiff with Laziness and Irreverence in God's Worship: And the Feet often lame, and always trembling in the Paths of Holiness. No, all these Things must be rectify'd, by a due Contrition of Heart, and a Mind sensible of its Load of Impiety, before an acceptable Sacrifice can be offered unto God; neither is it sufficient for this Purpose, to smite upon the Breast, with, *God be merciful to me, a Sinner*; but there must be a due Sense of the Necessity of Reformation, with a careful Endeavour to practice it: For, alas!

He that bewails, but not forsakes his Sin, Confesses only what he'll do again.

And now being sensible with what Disposition you are to attend Divine Worship,

Worship; consider next the Place wherein this Worship is to be performed: It is, The House of God; presume not therefore to enter therein as into an Alehouse or common Cottage, but let thy Mind be affected with a Reverence becoming the Deity there worshiped, and thy Soul duly sensible of its Unworthiness to appear in the Presence of so Holy and Divine a Majesty: *How dreadful is this Place! This is none other than the House of God! And herein is taught the Way to Heaven! Therefore will I go into the House of the Lord, and call upon the Name of God; O Lord! I beseech Thee, deliver my Soul.* With this Ejaculation being brought to your Seat; be attentive to make the best Improvement you can of the Advice and Instructions there given: But take Heed to avoid what is idly practised by some; namely, Of Repeating aloud the Prayers with the Minister: A Custom this, as unseemly as it is absurd; and as simple as it is ridiculous: For to what End is it used? Is it that they mean hereby to help the Minister out in what he is about? Or rather, Are they not more likely to interrupt him in his Duty? Or, Is it for the People's Sake, that they may understand the Minister's Voice the better? Truly they use the most effectual Means to make it unintelligible: Or lastly, Is it for their own Benefit? They have a Book, how is it they don't observe it silently to themselves, or else be attentive to the Minister alone? To what Purpose then does this Indecency tend? Truly for no other End, but to shew their Folly, by disturbing the Congregation with their Ignorance. Be thou careful therefore to avoid this idle Custom, and while you present yourself before the Lord, let the Consideration of his tremendous Majesty and Holiness banish from your Mind all worldly and vain Thoughts whatsoever, always carefully avoiding the Sin and shameful Practice, too common in these Days, of behaving yourself with cold Indifference and lukewarm Affections: Sometimes dreaming

like the Sluggards, who, thro' Indolence and Indifference, in Holy Things, think it too much Labour to awaken themselves from their Drowsiness, and carefully attend upon the Duties of Devotion: Or musing like the Worldling, who, as tho' he thought the Time devoted to Religion lost, is more intent in thinking upon his worldly Concerns: Or gazing about like the Idle, whose Time is chiefly employ'd in diverting themselves, with observing who comes in, and who goes out; what they have on, and what not? Or Talking like the Impertinent, who presume to discourse about Things vain and unprofitable, while their Minds should be wholly employ'd upon Divine Meditations: Or Laughing like the Insolent, who are not ashamed to make a Mock even at those Things which are Serious and Sacred.

To what Purpose is it for such as these to come to Divine Worship, when they are so indisposed to receive any Benefit thereby? Whose Behaviour gives Scandal to Religion, and much Offence to the Pious, and who doubtless return Home, worse Sinners than they came.

I say, Be not thou therefore like any of these, for so God will not accept thy Sacrifice, but it will be abominable unto him, who hates cold Indifference and luke-warm Affections: And presume not to sit like the Drone, while you praise God in the Voice of the Psalms, or any other Part of Divine Worship, wherein Order, Decency, and Reverence requires a more humble and lowly Posture. An irreverent and shameful Custom this, introduced by the indolent Christians of these latter Ages, but unknown to the Church in the primitive Times, and condemn'd even by Reason itself: For judge you, I pray, Is it fit for a Creature to behave himself with more Irreverence and Disrespect towards his God and Creator, than towards his temporal Prince?

As therefore Duty and Reverence, would oblige a Person to be in a standing Posture, while he is setting forth the

the Praises and magnifying the Mercies of the One, so should it much more so of the Other also, whom we are commanded to worship with our Souls and Bodies, which are his, (*Rom. xii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 20.*)

Be not thou therefore guilty, I pray you, of this idle and irreverent Custom, which argues a great Defect of that awful Sense we ought to have of the Divine Majesty before whom we present ourselves, and is ne'er a whit the less criminal altho' often used by good People, and even by some of the Clergy themselves; whom here I would earnestly entreat so to consider its Unseemliness, as for ever to refrain from it; and that, if not out of Reverence (*pardon the Expression, for it is not meant reproachfully*) yet for the sake of Example, that Others also may see it, and be ashamed to do otherwise; for Example is generally of more Force than Precept, especially in such whose Office it is to minister about Holy Things, and may possibly reclaim those, who being Pertinacious in their indolent Disposition, will be reclaimed no otherways: Here also, let Parents be careful to advise their Children of these Things, and Masters their Servants; that so all may know and understand, That God is not only to be worshiped in Spirit and in Truth, but with Reverence and Decency also: To see Children and Youth guilty of this Behaviour, is most scandalously shameful, and should carefully be discountenanced by those unto whose Authority they are subject.

But further: Is it thought indecent to sit while the *Psalms* are read? And why not also while they are sung? *Yes rather*, why not more so, since this is a much more Spiritual Exercise, and requires the Body to be in such a Posture, as may most assist the Soul in lifting up herself to God, which sitting by no Means agrees with, and therefore should carefully be avoided by all: Wherefore, let us every One be ashamed any longer to be guilty of this Criminal Indolency, which is deservedly worthy to be exploded by all Christians, and banish'd

from the Congregation of the Faithful, as the Precept of the Apostle expressly requires (*1 Cor. xiv. 26, 33, 40.*) And in Order hereto, it should be discourag'd by each Member of the Christian Society; but let your Heart be purify'd from evil Affections and Lusts; let it also be cleansed from the Choler of Passion, the Phlegm of Sloth, the Melancholly of Dispair, and the Sanguine of Levity and Voluptuousness; that so being duly prepar'd, *You may with one Mind, and one Mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And as the Object of your Worship and Adoration is in Heaven, even so let your Heart and Affections be there also; God requires to be worshiped, *With all our Might, our Soul, and our Strength*, which cannot be duly done except the Body assist the Soul in Devotion; and tho' it be objected from the Apostle's Words, *That Bodily Exercise profiteth little*; yet, when it co-operates with the sincere Affections of the Soul, it is very useful, and helps to compleat that Godliness which the same Apostle commends, *As profitable unto all Things*: Those therefore who object against external Worship as unnecessary, would do well to consider what they say, and search the Scripture to be convinced of their Error, for from that it is, that he that would worship God aright, must take Example and learn how to worship him: There we find, That lifting up the Eyes towards Heaven, kneeling upon the Knees, bowing down the Head, lifting up, and spreading abroad the Hands, where all Acts of Religious Worship, used by those who are set forth for our Example; and so far short as we fall in our Imitation thereof, even so far deficient are we of *worshipping God in the Beauty of Holiness.* Moreover, when we converse with an earthly Friend, our Speech is directed towards him, and our Bodies kept in decent Behaviour before him; and shall we be less respectful to God, than to our Fellow-Creature! Wherefore judge you, I pray, whether it is most becoming, either to have our Eyes disposed to-

wards the Object of our Adoration, or to place them upon any other Thing?

Thus therefore, with Mind and Soul lifted up to God, let him be your Fear, your Delight, your Treasure, and the Crown of your Hope; being intensely bent upon the due Performance of those Things, you are there required to observe; so shall your Recompence, of *Free Grace*, be equal to your Zeal and Diligence.

Sixthly. From considering how God is to be worshipp'd, it is necessary to be observ'd next, when, and where he is to be worshipp'd. And 1st, He is to be worshipp'd privately, at least, twice a Day: Every Morning and Evening, it is every Person's indispensable Duty, to offer unto God a Sacrifice of Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving, of each Particular, as Time and Necessity requires: But 2^{dly}, This Tribute of Worship should also be perform'd publickly once a Day, or oftener, as Time, Place, or Opportunity offers: But more especially on the Lord's Day, which is the Soul's great Festival, are you requir'd with greater Diligence to exercise yourself in these Religious Duties, always carefully attending the publick Assemblies of Divine Worship, so often as Opportunity will admit, and your Absence therefrom, *except in extraordinary Cases*, becomes so Criminal, as to bespeak you, if wilfully guilty thereof, unworthy the Title of your most Holy Profession; which *Duty*, however it be lightly esteem'd by some, who make the Sabbath a Day of Sport and wanton Recreation, or a Market Day to sell and get Gain: Yet dreadful will be the Consequences thereof, when God shall call them to an Account for the Breach of his Commands, and the Profanation of his Sabbaths, which he has strictly commanded to be kept Holy, threatening Punishments to the *Rebellious* (*Exod. xx. 9, 10, 11, and xiii. 15. Lev. xix. 30.*) and promising Rewards to the *Obedient* (*Isa. lvi. 2, and lviii. 13, 14.*) which Day, as the Morning should be spent in pious Meditations and Exercises

of Devotion, so should the Evening also correspond thereto, both being dedicated to the Service of God, and the Good of the Soul.

But is this the Practice of the present Age! Yea rather, does not Experience convince us, That the Religion of most now chiefly consists in *Words*, not in *Actions*; in *Precept*, not in *Practice*; in *Scripture Phrases*, not in *Scripture Duties*? How many are there who live as tho' they had voluntarily excommunicated themselves from the Church, and sold themselves to work Evil! How frequently do we meet Multitudes on the Sabbath Day going from the House of God, whose open Doors invite them in to partake of the Food of Life and live for ever, but they will not; so difficult is Man to be persuaded to Happiness, the natural Desire of Nature, that it is wonderful to conceive! chusing rather to follow his own evil Inclinations, the Fore-runner of eternal Ruin, which all Nature abhors, than to be induc'd to avoid it; neither is it only the Illiterate and less considerate Part of Mankind that is chargeable with this unhappy Mischance, but others also: For, how often do we see Men, otherwise of great Learning and Prudence, shamefully idle away the Sabbath, together with their Families, either at Home, *perhaps about their secular Affairs*, or taking their Pleasure abroad; while Religion is wholly neglected by them, as tho' they were ignorant of the Name of Christianity, or had quite forgot the Fourth Commandment!

And where now, I beseech you, is their Token of Love to Christ, in return for the mighty Things he has done for them? alas! it is lost, and they regard it not, though with that they lose themselves: But now, be not thou any longer as a Sheep without a Shepherd, wandering in your Destruction; come to the Waters of Life, drink, and live for ever; observe the Sabbath to keep it Holy; the Church, that thou obey her Precepts, as she is obedient to Christ: There you have among other valuable

Things,

Things, the most comfortable *Sacrament* of the Lord, offer'd to your Acceptance for the Confirmation of your Faith, and cleansing away your Sins; and will ye not accept it? Oh! don't be so unwise; remember, it was prepar'd for Sinners, and the greater Sinner thou art, the more Need hast thou of it: Christ has ordain'd it, and commanded the Use thereof for thy Benefit, but will you add still to your Sins by rejecting it? By which you evidence, that as yet you have not receiv'd Christ: But would you receive him? Then rebel no longer: He has left it as a Token of his Love to us, and shall we refuse the Token of ours to him, by not accepting it? But you will say, *It is a Sacred Serious Thing, I am not prepar'd!* Oh! why is it that you are not? Is it not your Sins that separate between you and your God? And will you still continue to add thereto by Rebellion? Is it not a Command; *Do this in Remembrance of Me?* And will you not obey that Command? Repent of your Sins therefore, and come to this Divine Feast, as a Token of your hearty Contrition and Desire of Amendment: Remember you can receive no Pardon without a Reformation; and you cannot repent without Grace; and how can you have Grace when you refuse the Means of obtaining it? *It is a Serious Thing to come to the Holy Sacrament:* Yes, but not more Serious than to repent of your Sins; which can never be done while you live in the wilful Breach of any of God's Commands, as you most certainly do, while you neglect this Divine Institution: Are you Serious in coming to Church for Instruction in the Improvement of Life? And will you refuse the Means tending thereto, when offer'd? *Yes*, will you reject the Advice frequently given from the Pulpit, exhorting you to come to the Holy Sacrament, as what Christ has appointed as absolutely necessary to eternal Life? Is this to bewail and forsake your Sins before God, to add thereto the Sin of Rebellion before you leave his House?

Observe how they make Speed to depart, casting Christ behind their Backs! And what? Do they hope for Salvation from him, whom now they will not hear, nay, even fly from? Unhappy Man! Stay! stay, hear the Word of God; *Thus saith the Lord; Forasmuch as ye come unto me as the People cometh, and sit before me as my People, and hear my Words, but ye will not to do them; pouring much Love with your Mouth, but in your Heart going after your Covetousness;* therefore as I live, saith the Lord God, *Surely mine Oath, the Oath of Obedience, that ye have despised, and my Covenant, the Covenant of Peace, that ye have broken, even it will I recompence upon your own Head, saith the Lord. Thine own Wickedness shall correct thee, and thy Backslidings shall reprove thee.*

"Know therefore and see that it is an evil Thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my Fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts." *Wherefore return unto me, O back sliding Children, and I will return unto you, and have Mercy upon you,* saith the Lord. Observe here, O ye Christian Deserters, the Word of God, and will you not obey? To what Purpose than is it for you to come to Church? Is it not to prevaricate with God, or plainly tell him, you will not have him to reign over you? Or do you hope to sin less heinously by abstaining from the Sacrament? Alas! Do not so miserably deceive yourself, for by this, you add greatly to your Sin: Or would you stay till you can sin no longer, and then come? Verily, it will then be of no Service to you; it was ordain'd for Sinners, and so long as you cease to be a Sinner, so long it is unnecessary: Deceive not yourself therefore any longer by such idle Excuses: *Yes*, be ashamed any more to be guilty of such vile Ingratitude, such wilful Rebellion against thy God and Saviour: If a Favour is offer'd to you by an earthly Prince, will you not accept it? How much less ought you to refuse so great a Favour.

Favour, the Favour of Eternal Life offer'd to you by the *King of Kings* and *Lord of Lords*? But whatsoever the Generality of People's Conceptions are concerning the Usefulness of the Blessed *Sacrament*, while they are in Health, yet it seems they have very extraordinary ones about it upon their sick Bed, by the great Desire they then express of receiving it, before they die; even as tho' they esteem'd it as a *Pass* to convey them safe to Heaven; and since such is their Opinion of it then, it seems strange that it should be so much neglected at other Times, and bespeaks their Sin to be so much the greater, in refusing it as often as it is offer'd; now therefore refuse it no longer, *but come*, receive it and live for ever; be not any longer terrified with those dreadful Words, *Of eating and drinking your own Damnation*, and believe not every one's Writing which proclaims *Death* and *Judgment* against an unfinning Obedience after the Reception of the Blessed *Sacrament*; which Writings, tho' doubtless they were well intended by their Authors, yet are they generally of much greater Prejudice than Benefit to the World; wherefore, I would to God they were all buried in Oblivion; inasmuch as they cast a stumbling Block before weak and scrupulous Minds, and lay such a grievous Burden upon them as neither we nor our Fathers were ever able to bear: Consider now, I beseech you, what has been said; consider it, I say, so as to practice it, and be well assur'd of this as a certain Truth, That wilfully to abstain from that Holy Feast, is to rebel against Christ, and render yourself unworthy of eternal Life: Come therefore, but come prepar'd; but how? not full of your own Righteousness, but of your Sinfulness; and bring with you a due Sense of your great Obligations to God for such an inestimable Favour; an humble Acknowledgment of your own Unworthiness to receive it; a due Contrition for your Sins past, and an earnest Desire of Amendment for Time to come; a Thirst after Christ, and hope for Pardon thro' Faith in his Blood:

Thus will you come to this Holy Ordinance duly cloathed with the acceptable Wedding Garment; a Soul thus prepar'd cannot fail of being accepted and obtaining its Reward; while they that resist and despise it receive to themselves eternal Damnation.

Seventhly. A further Excitement to Religion is the Duty of Example, *which we are commanded* so to manifest before Others, that they by seeing *our good Works, may be induc'd thereby to the Love and Practice of Piety.* And this surely was never more necessary than now, when every Impiety is boldly committed with Greediness; Men are so far from preparing for their latter End, that they unwillingly hear of Death, and can hardly be persuaded but that they shall live here for ever; hence the Thoughts of Religion is always burdensome to them, and to persuade them to Piety, is to deprive them of all the Pleasures of Life; it is intolerable, *say they*, they cannot endure the Thoughts of it; and he who recommends it, is esteemed as a *Meddler*, and a *troublesome, busy Body*: They seem industrious about nothing more, than how to discourage all Piety by their Example, and are glad when they can bring Others over to join with them in ridiculing Religion, and despising the great *Author* of its Institution: Thus madly are they bent upon their own Destruction; they are neither afraid nor ashamed to blaspheme that great Name whereby we are called Christians, and even to represent the Holy *Jesus* by the Character of a *Cheat* and *Impostor*, deceiving Mankind by Craft and Subtilty! And no wonder then, that they should with no less horrible Impiety, impudently reject the Sacred Scriptures as prophane, and sport themselves with contumeliously treating them, by denying their Divine Original: Thus they seem to take more Pains to dispute themselves into their own Damnation, than would suffice to make them happy! accounting all Things prophane but what are prophane. *Alas! happy Times indeed!* But behold, God is now

at Hand with the Sword of Vengeance, ready to cut them in two, *and divide them their Portion with the Unbelievers, where shall be Weeping and Gnaſhing of Teeth.*

But now, leaving theſe profeſſed Enemies of their own Souls, to the unconvenanted Mercies of God, let us viſit a little thoſe who appear more favourable to the Chriſtian Cauſe, and acknowledge the Neceſſity of Religion: But, alas! even among theſe, *How greatly does the Love of the World transcend the Love of God! The Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs, more than the true Riches of Jeſus Chriſt!* They profeſs God with their Mouths, but in their Hearts they deny him. How like a Sword piercing my Soul, has been the Words of one Chriſtian ſpeaking of another! *What does he go to Church for? Has he not a Family to provide for at Home?* For my Part, *I am aſham'd*, ſay they, *to appear at Church upon a Week Day, leſt it ſhould be thought ſtrange!* O miſerable Man! thus to expreſs thyſelf; *Why does he come to Church?* I aſk thee, By what Authority doſt thou abſtain from it? he has Buſineſs there, and ſo have you by Divine Command, which while he diligently obeys, he is providing for his Family by the moſt prudent Means he can, as knowing that without God's Bleſſing all his Endeavours are vain and fruitleſs: Whiſt you procure His Diſpleaſure upon yours, by Diſobedience: *Art thou aſhamed to appear at Church?* Chriſt tells thee, *That He alſo will be aſhamed of thee:* But, ſay you, The Care of your Family keeps you away; what? Do you love your Family better than Chriſt? *Then are you unworthy of Him;* Remember, *You cannot ſerve God and Mammon:* And how great ſoever your Temporal Gain may be, yet your Loſs will be infinitely greater in your Eternal Intereſt: And what will it profit you, to have acquired a large Fortune for your Children, while you yourſelf are loſt and undone for ever? Beſides, in how wealthy a Condition, ſoever you may leave them; yet, without God's Bleſſing attending it;

alas! how ſoon is it ſquandred away and loſt; verifying the common and vulgar Proverb: *What's got over the Devil's Back, is ſpent under his Belly;* But admit that your Shop will not ſuffer you to attend the Publick Worſhip of God; does it alſo compel you to Deceive? Does your Family require this? *Tas*, ſay ſome, *Shopkeepers muſt Lie; it is abſolutely neceſſary in the Way of Buſineſs:* Why? *Becauſe*, ſay they, *Buyers beat down the Price of Goods ſo low, as not to allow a living Profit.* Truly, how great ſoever this Evil is, you have brought it upon yourſelves by your Lies, and your Complaint of it is a ſtrong Argument that you ought to leave it off; for the Buyer knowing it to be cuſtomary for *Shopkeepers* generally to over-rate their Goods, are therefore for deſiring them cheaper, as not knowing when he's well uſed: But this is no Excuse for your Lies; that helps not the Matter in the leaſt; unleſs you mean thereby to impoſe upon the Buyer, by affirming the Goods coſt you much more than they really did: It is not Neceſſary, therefore, compels you to this great Sin, but Avarice; *you would be Rich before the Time;* not conſidering, That Riches got by a lying Tongue, always proves destructive to the Owner: It argues alſo a great Diſtruſt of God's Providence; who has promis'd to bleſs the honeſt Induſtry of the Pious, whiſt He threatens Lyars with Wrath and Judgment: *Their Portion*, ſays He, *ſhall be in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimſtone.*

Doubtleſs, every Perſon ought to live by their honeſt Induſtry, and to enjoy the good Things of Life with Thankfulneſs; but he who ſeeks to enrich himſelf by unjuſt Gain, betrays the uttermoſt Folly and Weakneſs, and is as one who prepares Inſtruments of Cruelty for his own Deſtruction; neither is that Buyer leſs blame worthy, who would have Goods at his own Price, tho' to the Deſtruction of the Seller: Such a Perſon is a Peſt to Society, and an Enemy to his Country; neither is he any more worthy of Eſteem, than a Robber that would deprive

prive another of his Substance, were it in his Power.

Consider then, I beseech you, the Reasonableness of what is here, *in Love*, advis'd : Leave off Deceit in your Trade, it will ease you of much Trouble, and procure you much Gain, and the *Hagler* will sooner be done soliciting, when he finds an unalterable Price is fixt upon the Goods, than by ten thousand Lies, or wicked Affeuerations. Shew yourselves Christians, therefore, by abhorring what Christ abhors, and let every Man speak Truth to his Neighbour, *So shall ye not bite, and devour one another, and God will bless ye.*

Consider the great Advantage it will be to yourselves and Children, to live in the Faith and Fear of God : It will make you Happy Here and Hereafter ; it will intale the Blessing of God upon your Posterity, who has promis'd, *That the Seed of the Righteous shall not suffer Want :* Thy Business will never succeed so well, as when God blesses it, which He will certainly do, if you are not wanting in your Duty to Him ; and your Life will never be so Happy, as when your Conscience approves it ; which assures you, *That a little with the Fear of the Lord, is better than great Riches without it :* If you'll think so favourably of what is here advis'd, as to observe it, you will find it true, to your Eternal Joy ; but if not, then the Day will most assuredly come e'er long, when to your everlasting Confusion, you will know you had friendly Advice offered you, but you would not regard it.

But however difficult it is to persuade Men to the Love of Religion and Piety ; yet, Who is there so Wicked as don't hope for Salvation ? *Tea*, you shall hear the common Swearer, profanely *Swear* and *Curse*, and profess he hopes to be sav'd in the same Breath ! Why ? *Because*, says he, *I believe in God, and he is merciful :* *Yes*, So do the Devils, nay they go farther, *For they also Believe and Tremble* ; and therefore have as much Right to Salvation as you, while you thus remain in your Sins : Every

one is willing to lay hold on God's Mercy, while they forget his Justice ; whereby the Sinner, without sincere Repentance, stands most assuredly condemn'd to Eternal Torments : And surely, we cannot sufficiently lament the stupendious Madnefs and Folly of Human Nature in this Particular ; namely, *That Mankind thinks so lightly of their Eternal Interest, while they shew so much Diligence in worldly Affairs :* If a Temporal Crown is offered to Sale ; Oh ! what a Number of Competitors it has striving for it ! What Difficulties, what Dangers and Distresses do they not readily undergo, to obtain, even a very small Share therein ? while at the same Time, an Eternal Crown, Infinitely of more Value than the whole World it self, is offered, and has no Rivals contending for it ! *Tea*, It is dispis'd and neglected as a Thing of Nought ! And what will not a Person do for filthy Lucre ? See there the unhappy Maiden, prostituting her Innocence, and made a Sink of all Uncleannefs and Filthiness ; observe her watching Night and Day for the Prey ; expos'd to be vilely abus'd and scourg'd by those with whom she has to do ; and hereby also, to many sore Diseases and excruciating Pains ; a Slavery this, worse than the Mines or Gallies ; and at last, gives her Soul to Eternal Torments ! and all to preserve a miserable wretched Life ; which in respect to Eternity, *in its longest Period*, is but as a Moment : O ! the amazing Stupidity of Human Nature ! my Soul bleeds with Concern for such miserable Wretches ; and what can I do for them ? Methinks, nothing could be too difficult ; nothing too hazardous for me to undertake, so far as Power and Life would go, were it possible to draw them from the Pit of Destruction, and save them from Eternal Ruin : *Divine Grace assisting me*, with what Celerity could I run to the Executioner ! And with *Patience*, willingly shed forth my Life for them : And Oh ! that they would be advis'd ; *but herein I despair of being heard* ; I would earnestly intreat them, for God's Sake, and their own Soul's

Soul's Sake, to save their immortal Souls, by forsaking their miserable Course of Life: I would beseech them to seek their Bread by honest Industry, and flee to God with true Repentance for Pardon and Mercy: *Yea*, I would persuade them to trust in Him for Assistance and Support; *who would never leave nor forsake them.*

Observe further, the wise Worldling; What prodigious Pains and Care don't he take in heaping up Earthly Treasure, which alas! *is but for a Moment*: He goes to Bed late and weary; is up early in the Morning; Industrious the whole Day, and eats his Bread with Carefulness; while an Eternal Treasure in the Heavens is wholly neglected by him! O! the unspeakable Folly and Weakness of Human Nature! How can it be sufficiently admired, or too sorely lamented! He who To-day freely gives his Soul for a Mite of the World; would To-morrow give ten Thousand Worlds, *were they in his Power*, to redeem his Soul again: Of this Thing they are warned before Hand, but they will not hear, nor be persuaded to believe the Truth. *Speak to them about Profit and Gain*; nothing is more ready to hear and obey than they; but if you discourse about Religion, and the Necessity of Christian Obedience, alas! nothing is more Deaf and Dumb: *The Lord pardon thy Servant in this Thing*, is their Request, and lay not Sin to our Charge herein; is their Petition: Oh! they are very Pious on a sudden; *Yea*, but it is to be more Wicked; their Hands are stretched forth towards Heaven, but it is to imprecate or request a free License to Sin; and if that cannot be obtain'd, *they will take it by Force*; their Eyes run down with Tears, *but it is*, lest their darling Object should be taken from them; *O spare me this Sin*; say they, *is it not a little One? And my Soul shall live*: Should their Conscience sollicit them to Repentance, they presently reply; *Go thy Way for this Time, when I have a convenient Season, I will call for thee*. But O sinner, *whatsoever thy darling Vice be, remem-*

ber, That either that must die, or thee. If you present them with a good Book, perhaps they may be prevail'd upon to read it, but by no Means to observe it; *God, say they, is Merciful, He don't require such Slavery of us*, (for so they profanely call Religion, which yet is perfect Freedom in Respect to the Slavery of Sin) *once a Week 'is enough for us to attend Church; we care not to go oftner.* And why once a Week! Don't the same Authority which requires your Obedience then, equally require it every Day? And what? is one Day's sluggish Devotion sufficient to atone for six Days sinning? Is Sin so easily expiated! Are you content to be so us'd by your own Servants? *Does one Day's Diligence satisfy for six Days Idleness?* No, by no Means; *it is intolerable, say they, it must not be endur'd.* And what? would you deal worse with God, than you would be dealt by from them, and plead His Mercy in Favour of your Rebellion? No, He is just as well as merciful, and by that He is compelled, *If I may so speak*, to execute Vengeance upon the Disobedient; according to His Promise, *That He will not suffer the Wicked to go free, but will surely punish him for his Sin?* which sometimes in Mercy He inflicts upon them Here, that by Repentance they may be sav'd Hereafter: And yet, *these excellent Christians!* as though they thought God was much indebted to them, for their Moral-Honesty, which the Laws of the Land obliges them to; and the seventh Day's Appearance at Church, unto which Custom moves them; loudly complain against Him, when He visits them for their Transgression, *Lord!* say they, *I never did one ill Thing in my Life that I should be thus afflicted!* Ah, but did you ever do a good One? *Yea*, have you not grievously offended by the Sins of Omission? Ask your Conscience, and that will vindicate the Justice of God in punishing your Offences, as also His Mercy, by calling you hereby to Repentance and Salvation: Oh therefore, be wakened I beseech you, by the fatherly Correction of the Almighty; Repent

of your Sins, the Sins of Omission and wilful Negligence; which otherwise will as most assuredly condemn you, as the Sins of Commission; and for the Future, be careful to set a good Example to Others, that you may be a Christian, not only in Profession, but also in Deed: For in vain is it to hope for any Benefit by the bare Profession of Christianity, while you neglect to practice it: And so much as Sin abounds, even so much the greater is the Necessity for good Examples, that if possible, Others may be thereby reclaimed from the Error of their Ways: And was good Examples ever more necessary than now? Now, I say, if ever, sure Example is necessary, when Christianity is in so languishing a Condition, as almost to be abandon'd from our Hearts and Minds, while Sin and worldly Affections resides and governs there: And how can we sufficiently bewail the Impiety of the present Age? Or how can we truly describe its Wickedness? Surely it cannot be better delineated, than in the Words of the Prophet. Hear, O Heaven! says he, And give Ear, O Earth! For the Lord hath spoken; Behold! I have nourished up Children, and they have rebelled against Me; the Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib; but Israel doth not know, My People doth not consider the God of their Salvation. Ah, sinful Nation; A People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, and provoked the Holy One of Israel to Anger; yea, they are gone away backward; from the Sole of the Foot even to the Head, there is no Soundness in it, but Wounds and Bruises, and putrifying Sores: None calleth for Justice, nor any pleadeth for Truth, they trust in Vanity and speak Lies; they conceive Mischief, and bring forth Iniquity; their Feet run to Evil, and make haste to shed innocent Blood; their Thoughts are Thoughts of Iniquity, Wasting and Destruction are in their Paths; the Way of Peace they knew not, and there is no Judgment in their Goings; they have made them crooked Paths,

whosoever goeth therein; shall not know Peace. Therefore is Judgment far from us, neither doth Justice overtake us; we await for Light, but behold Obscurity; for Brightness, but we walk in Darkness; we look for Judgment, but there is none; for Salvation, but it is far from us; for our Transgressions are multiplied before Thee, O Lord, and our Sins testify against us; for our Transgressions are with us, and as for our Iniquities, we know them: In Transgressing and Lying against the Lord, and departing from our God; speaking Oppression and Revolt; conceiving and uttering from the Heart, Words of Falshood; thus Judgment is turned away backward, and Justice standeth afar off; for Truth is fallen in the Streets, and Equity cannot enter; Yea, Truth faileth, and he that departeth from Evil, maketh himself a Prey.

This then is our Complaint, yea, this is our Condition: Alas! How is the faithful City become an Harlot? It was full of Judgment, but now Oppression; Righteousness lodged in the Streets thereof, but now Murderers, daily crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting Him to an open Shame: And shall I not visit for these Things, saith the Lord, Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? Ah! I will ease Me of Mine Adversaries, saith the Lord, and avenge Me of Mine Enemies: Yes, According to their Deeds, accordingly He will repay; Fury to His Adversaries, and Recompence to His Enemies.

And were, I beseech you, is Christianity now! Alas! She is full of Sorrow and Lamentation; and as a desolate Widow, bereaved of her Children, She cries aloud in the Bitterness of her Soul, Oh! That mine Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night for the Sin of my People; Ah me! is any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow, wherein the Lord hath suffered me to be afflicted in the Day of his fierce Anger? My Children have forsaken me, and gone into Captivity; Sin hath bound them, and Satan hath lead them Prisoners: Therefore

Therefore

Therefore doth mine Eyes run down with Tears; because the Comforter which should relieve my Soul, is far from me; my Children are Desolate, the Enemy Satan prevails against them, and they are not.

Thus doth She lament and bemoan herself in the Language of the Pious, and who can refrain from Tears, while they consider the Cause of her sad Complaint? *O Christianity, thou charming Name, how art thou forsaken! My Soul is greatly distress'd for thee, thou most delightful Queen of all Perfection; how dost thou now sit solitary! for behold, Where is the Zeal of this Nation? Where is Her Love to Christ answerable to the Favour He has bestow'd upon Her? Yea also, Where is the Church of Ephesus? Where the Church of Smyrna? Of Pergamos? Of Thyatira? Of Sardis? Of Philadelphia? And of Laodicea? Where, I say, are the seven famous Churches of Asia? Alas! they are lost and droop'd into Nothing! Sin hath defac'd them, and Satan hath carried them away Captive, utterly extinguishing some, and others scarcely retains the Name of Christianity; And shall we escape? No verily, for except we repent, we shall all likewise perish: God will not always strive with Man; he has threatned Vengeance to the Disobedient, and he will inflict it: See now the solitary Condition of Her, who was once most nobly adorn'd with Beauty and Lustre; She, at whose Birth Angels rejoyc'd, and proclaim'd, Peace to the Inhabitants of the Earth, how is She now become as a Widow bereav'd of her Children! She that was great among the Nations, and Princes among the Provinces, how is She now forsaken and made desolate! She, whose Perfection and Amiability induc'd Kings and Emperors willingly to submit to Her Yoke, and Multitudes of People, chearfully to lay down their Lives for Her sake; how is She become tributary to the Power of Darkness! For behold, where is that Holy Zeal; that Fervency of Spirit; that Love to God; wherewith Christianity was once so no-*

bly adorn'd, to the great Astonishment of the Unbelievers, and Conversion of the Infidel-World? Alas! it is dwindled into wretched Carelessness and cold Indifferency: This then is our present unhappy Condition; Christianity complains of being forsaken, and She crys aloud for Relief, but is not heard: And now, who sees not the Necessity of pious Examples? Or who wants any further to be inform'd of the miserable and languishing Condition Christianity is now in? Experience will convince them that it chiefly consists in vain Pretences, empty Words, and wretched Carelessness in Holy Things: Should the Question be ask'd, *Who is for Christianity, Who?* we should hear Multitudes loudly proclaiming themselves of Her Society, and professing themselves Members thereof: But should it be ask'd once more, *Who will conform themselves to Her Precepts? Who will take up the Yoke of Christ, and daily follow Him? Who will defend his Honour with their Lives and Fortunes?* Good God! how silent and dumb is the Answer! *This is a hard Saying, say they, who can bear it?* They love Christianity well, but their Sins better; *Yea, they will confess Christ with their Mouth, but in their Hearts prefer their Treasure before him, being Christians by Name only, but Reprobates by Nature:* They will practice Religion indeed, so far as it may be done without Expence, or restraining them from their Vices, but no further; *Yea, many there are who talk much of Christ, complain much of the Wickedness of the Age, and express great Concern for the Decay of Religion, who yet will not move one Step in its Cause, or be at the least Charges to encourage those that would: Nay, and what is still more extraordinary, use Arguments to dissuade and discourage them from it; yea, and revile those that are zealously affected, for his Honour! But, O foolish People and unwise, do you thus requite the Lord, who hath made you! And your Redeemer, who hath purchased you!*

To what Purpose then is all your Pretences to Christianity? Doubtless they are vain and unprofitable: For, believe me, Reader, (*and it is a Truth most worthy your Consideration*) That let your Pretences to Christianity be what they will, yet your Religion is vain, your Faith is also vain, any further than as you are hereby induc'd to copy after the great *Author* thereof, who was never more zealous in promoting Virtue, than detecting Vice; and strove for the Truth unto Death, *leaving us a Command, That we should follow his Example* (St. *John* xiii. 15. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21. *Rom.* xv. 5.) from an Obligation to which, no One can be excluded, tho' in never so high or mean a Condition; and he who would oppose or attempt to discourage the meanest Endeavours herein, gives a plain Demonstration, That he is far from being a true Disciple of *Christ*, who has said, (St. *Mat.* xii. 30.) *That he that is not with Me is against Me*: And as the Widow's Mite was well accepted, even so will the best Endeavours of the meanest Persons be: For is Truth e'er the less excellent or unworthy of Esteem, whether it comes from a Prince, or a Peasant? from an old or young Person? Or rather, Is not the Opposition against Truth itself, as was the Complaint of Old (*Isa.* xxx. 9, 10. and lix. 4, 14, 15.) It was our Saviour's Complaint, *That He was hated by the World, for testifying that the Deeds thereof were Evil* (St. *John* vii. 7.) And in these Days also, a Person that stands up for the Truth, oft times procures to himself many Enemies, with much Slander and Reproach; and they that will live Godly in *Christ Jesus*, must expect to suffer Persecution.

But what then? Shall we refrain from the Cause of *Christ*, for Fear of incurring the Displeasure of the Unwise? Must we stand more in Fear of Man's Displeasure than God's? God forbid; for so *Satan* would be gratify'd indeed, and triumph in his Victory.

Eighthly. We must not be weary in Well doing, but proceed with Courage

in the Work of Piety, against all the Opposition that Man or Devil by his Craft may obstruct us with.

It is every Christian's Duty to speak in the Words of holy *Job*, *Till I die, I will not remove mine Integrity from me*, (*Job* xxvii. 5.) We ought to consider ourselves, as the Servants of the great God, whose Power is always able to protect us, in the uttermost Dangers, and give us Peace and Tranquility of Mind in the midst of the greatest Tempests: Slander and Reproach we know, has a natural Tendency to affect the Mind, and disquiet the Peace of the Soul; especially when it comes from those, who make great Profession of Christianity, *from whom better Things might be expected*; yet even by these, the sincerest Zeal, sometimes meets with the severest Censures, together with vile Reflections upon those who practice Religion in Sincerity and Truth.

I don't like such mighty Professors of Religion, say they, it proceeds from a vain-glorious Self-conceit'dness, a spiritual, proud Disposition, *as they call it*, and is like this or that Person, who also made great Pretences to Religion, but were notorious Hypocrites, vile Cheats, and Impostors. *And what then?* Because the Sacred Scripture is abus'd by some, who pervert it to their own Destruction, *must it not therefore be piously us'd by others?* Or because the Sabbath is prophan'd by some, *must it not therefore be kept Holy by others?* So likewise, because Religion is abus'd by some, and applied to wicked Purposes, *ought it not therefore to be used by others for good Ends?* Surely to deny this, would be to deny the Necessity of doing a good Action, because others may counterfeit it to evil Purposes.

And what? *Is Zeal a Mark of Hypocrisy?* Then must *Christ* and His Apostles be accounted the greatest of all Hypocrites! Behold here then, the Unreasonableness of these slanderous Reproaches, which even good People, *well esteem'd for their Piety*, are too apt, rashly to cast upon others, whose Zeal per-

haps

haps they imagine to be a Reproach to theirs, or who differ somewhat from them in their Sentiments; and none are more prone to be guilty of this odious Crime, than those who vehemently exclaim against judging and censuring others, tho' they themselves are most apt to be guilty thereof; by whose Mouths Satan is sometimes permitted to speak, as he did once by St. Peter to Christ; and which deserves no better a Reply than what was then return'd to him; namely, *Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an Offence unto me; for thou rightly savourest not the Things that be of God, but those that be of Men.* (St. Matt. xvi. 23.)

These Things therefore, ought not to discourage us from the Work of the Lord, but rather to animate the Mind so much the more towards God, for whose Sake we suffer Reproach, while we endeavour to promote Virtue and detect Vice; which is the Duty of every One carefully to observe. For suppose an Enemy should invade a Country, in Order to deprive its Prince of his Subjects, and them of their Rights; would not both Duty and Interest oblige every Person thereof to oppose him to the uttermost of their Power, and expel him out of their Coasts? And might not those who were remiss and careless herein, be deem'd Enemies to their Country, and deservedly worthy of Punishment? Doubtless they would: This then is the present State of Christianity.

The Enemy Satan invades it, and with vehement Force, fights against Christ, our Prince, to deprive Him of His Subjects, and them of their Right, through his Promise, to Eternal Life.

Hence then, it becomes both the Duty and Interest of every Christian, to use their uttermost Diligence, in opposing his Proceedings, and if possible, to drive him out of their Coasts. This is a Matter of publick Benefit wherein every One is concern'd, who would be made eternally Happy; and as every Soldier is oblig'd to detect those whom they find Plotting against their Prince's Honour; even so is every Christian equally oblig'd to de-

fend the Honour of Christ against those who would scandalize and abuse it; and he who is negligent and careless herein, or by any Means seeks to discourage Others from it, justly deserves to be deem'd an Enemy to the Christian Cause, and in some measure is guilty of the vilest Apostasy against God; unto whom, by his Baptismal Covenant, he took a most Solemn Oath of Allegiance; promising to submit himself to His Holy Will and Pleasure, and fight under His Banner against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and to continue His true and faithful Soldier and Servant unto his Life's End; which Promise of Obedience, can no otherwise be fulfill'd than by abhorring and detecting Sin, as the Word of God requires; wherein all are commanded to bear a Part without Exception; and they, who cannot either by their Tongues or their Pens, defend the common Interest of Religion; may yet at least do it by their good Examples; their Prayers, and Tears for the Christian Cause: The Necessity of which, is frequently exhibited from the Pulpit, and recommended by S. Paul, namely, *That we should admonish and provoke one another unto Love, and to good Works* (Rom. xv. 2, 14. Hebr. x. 24.) Wherefore, Christian Reader, well knowing how very apt Human Nature is to be discourag'd by Slander and Defamation, I do again earnestly intreat you, to proceed with Courage in the Work of the Lord; and they that will reproach, let them reproach; they must answer for it at the great Day of Judgment; but you shall be delivered: The Apostle commends it as a good Thing, *Always to be zealous in a good Cause*; and therefore he exhorts, *Not to be weary in Well-doing, for in due Season; says he, you shall reap if you sown not* (Gal. iv. 18. and vi. 9.) and what, though you should be esteem'd Mad by some for these Things, yet count that your Happiness, when with the same Apostle you can say, *It is to God, for your Sake, for the Love of Christ constraineth me*; and be well assured, That the more you suffer for God's Sake, the greater

greater will be your Reward, and Heaven itself will administer so much the more Comfort, by how much the greater Difficulty it is obtained: And surely, nothing more deserves your Diligence and Care, than this Work of Piety; because nothing is more acceptable unto God, wherein His Honour is deeply concern'd, and the Salvation of Souls labour'd after; wherein much Comfort shall be receiv'd from the Lord, even although you should be so frustrated in Success, as to complain in the Words of the Prophet; *All the Day long have I spread out my Hands unto a rebellious and disobedient People, which walketh in a Way that is not Good, after their own Thoughts; then I said, I have labour'd in vain, yet surely, my Judgment is with the Lord, and my Work with my God; Therefore, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my Strength, and my Salvation unto the End of the Earth.* Nothing therefore has so sure and so great a Recompence attending it, as this Work of Piety; wherein, by Divine Promise, every One shall be rewarded, thro' free Grace, not according to his Success, but according to his Sincerity, and Diligence in Labouring.

Ninthly. A Further Reason for our Continuance in the Practice of Piety, is Love to ourselves; which should remind us to be always considering the Danger of *Laying the Hand to the Plough, and looking back* (S. Luk. ii. 26.) and the present and future Benefits we lose thereby.

And here could I duly describe the miserable Effects of Impiety and Wickedness, how great a Slavery it brings a Man into, how it deprives him of the true Enjoyment of Life; the many dreadful Stings of Conscience wherewith thereby he is hedged round about, as with Thorns and Briars, daily afflicting him with frightful Fears and hellish Expectations, and the horrible Prospect Eternity sets before him; *I say*, could these Things be as clearly seen by Others, as they are felt by the Guilty, there would be no fur-

ther Need of Arguments to persuade a Person against Vice: As also; could I duly describe the Happy Effects of Piety, the great Advantages that a Religious Life is attended with; the great Enjoyment it gives a Person of the present Benefits of Life, as knowing how properly to use them; and the exceeding Joy that the Prospect of Eternity daily affords; *I say*, could I so truly describe these Things as to make them appear to Mortal Eyes, my Labour would then be finish'd, and no One would want any further Excitement to Piety; But alas! these can only be spiritually discern'd, and no otherwise known than by Practice it self; and happy, *yea, for ever bless'd and happy are they*, who will be persuaded to make diligent Trial thereof.

We call ourselves Christians, and think our Condition to be much superior to many Others, by the happy Privilege of calling God our Father, and Christ our Saviour; but what Advantage will this be to us, while we continue still in our Sins? Surely it will serve to no other End, than to render our Condition much worse than the worst of Heathens (Heb. x. 26, 27. 2 Pet. ii. 21) *Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I say?* Says the Author of Life: *Therefore depart ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels* (S. Luk. vi. 46. S. Matt. xxv. 41.) Christianity will be of no further Benefit to us, than as we live agreeable to its Precepts; which requires the utter Extirpation of Vice and Propriety; which, as it is every Person's Duty diligently to discourage, so more especially should those be careful to shew themselves zealous herein, upon whom the Power of Punishment is confer'd; *by duly punishing Offenders, and compelling them to forsake their Sins*; through whose supine Negligence, and wretched Carelessness herein it is, that Sin so much abounds among us, to the Scandal of Christianity in general, and the great Shame of this Nation in particular: Hence it is that we have so many unhappy Wretches, turn Preachers

or *Monitors* under the Gallows, to warn Others from the Sins of *Debauchery* and *Wickedness*, which has brought them to their shameful and untimely End, before they have lived out half their Days: Those Magistrates therefore, are doubtless very defective in their Duty for the Cause of Christ, *which above all Things, most ly deserves their utmost Concern*, who suffer Wickedness so much to abound and increase, without shewing more earnest Zeal in detecting and suppressing it: Was prophane Swearing, Cursing, Lewdness and Debauchery, &c. ever more common than it is now, with which the Land greatly mourns, and our Streets ring with the Sound thereof? And yet, who is there that regards it! The Act of Parliament is read Quarterly in Churches for Suppressing this Vice; but who puts it in Execution! Should the Laws of the Land be as much neglected in other Respects as in this, alas! how very miserable and wretched would the Affairs of Human Life then be! Doors and Bars would be no sufficient Defence against *Thieves* and *Robbers*; Plunder and Blood-shed would be the common Sound in the Streets: Death and Murder the awakening Alarm in the Bed-chamber. And is not the Soul's Welfare at least worthy of equal Concern with that of the Body? *Yea*, is it not infinitely preferable to it, in Respect to Eternity? And what? Is there any Thing more destructive to its future Happiness than this vile Custom of Prophane Cursing and Swearing? Why then should it go unpunish'd? Can we suppose it becoming a *Christian Magistrate*, to suffer his Fellow Creatures to be ruin'd eternally, through his Neglect in controlling the Cause of his Destruction? Why then is not the Act of Parliament devis'd for this Purpose, duly put in Execution against the Offenders? This unhappy Neglect, causes the very Reading the said Act in Churches, to give much Offence to some Pious People; who esteem it as prevaricating with God, thus to publish what is so necessary

to be observed, without duly regarding that it is observ'd; but yet to be offend'd at its Reading is an Error in Judgment; for by the same Reason neither ought the Sacred Scripture to be read in the Church, because many who hear it, will not observe to obey it: The Church performs Her Office herein well, in declaring to Others their Duty; if they neglect to obey, that is no Fault of Her's, but those whose Duty it is to obey, or cause it to be obey'd; namely, The Magistrates, upon whom Power is conferred for this Purpose, and how well it is performed by them, Experience sufficiently testifies: But now, for the Information of those to whom this Act is unknown, it is here transcrib'd *Verbatim*, and is as follows.

Anno Sexto & Septimo GULIELMI III.
Regis.

An Act for the more effectual Suppressing Prophane Cursing and Swearing.

WHereas it is found by Experience; That an Act of Parliament made in the one and twentieth Year of the Reign of King James the First, intituled, An Act to prevent and reform prophane Cursing and Swearing, hath proved ineffectual to the suppressing those detestable Sins, by reason of some Deficiencies in the said Act: Be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That if any Person or Persons shall, after the 24th Day of June, in the Year of our Lord 1695, prophanely Swear or Curse in the Presence or Hearing of any Justice of Peace of the County, Riding or Division, or of the Mayor or other head Officer, or Justice of Peace for any City or Town Corporate, where such Offence is or shall be committed, or that shall be thereof Convicted by Oath of one Witness, or by the Confession of the Party offending, before any Justice of Peace of the County,

or

or Mayor, or Bailiff, or other chief Officer, or Justice of the Peace of such City or Town Corporate, where the said Offence shall be committed, That then, for every such Offence, the Party so offending shall forfeit and pay to the Use of the Poor of the Parish, where such Offence or Offences shall be committed, the respective Sums herein after mention'd, that is to say, Every Servant, Day Labourer, Common Soldier and Common Seaman, One Shilling, and every other Person, Two Shillings: And in Case any of the Persons aforesaid, shall, after Conviction, offend a second Time, such Person shall forfeit and pay double; and if a third time, treble the Sum respectively by him or her to be paid for the first Offence.

And it is hereby further enacted, That upon Neglect or Refusal of Payment of the said Forfeiture, any Justice of Peace, of the County, Riding or Division, or Mayor, or other head Officer or Justice of Peace of any City, or Town Corporate, where the said Offences shall be committed, shall, and are hereby authorized and required to direct and send his Warrant to the Constable, Tithingman, Church-warden or Overseer of the Poor of the Parish where the Offence shall be committed, or where the Offender shall inhabit, thereby commanding them, or some one or more of them, to levy by Distress and Sale of the Goods of the Offender, the Sum so forfeited, for the Use of the Poor of the Parish, as aforesaid; and in Case no such Distress can be had, then every such Offender, being above the Age of 16 Years, shall, by Warrant under the Hand and Seal of the said Justice of Peace or other Officer, as aforesaid, be publickly set in the Stocks for the Space of one Hour for every single Offence, and for any Number of Offences, whereof he shall be convicted at one and the same time, then two Hours; and if the Party offending be under the Age of 16 Years, and shall not forthwith pay the said Forfeitures, then he or she shall, by Warrant, as aforesaid, be whipp'd by the Constable, or by the Parent, Guardian or

Master of such Offender in the Presence of the Constable.

And be it further enacted, that if any Justice of the Peace, or chief Magistrate, shall wilfully and wittingly omit the Performance of his Duty in the Execution of this Act, he shall forfeit the Sum of five Pounds, the one Moiety to the Use of the Informer, to be recovered by Action, Suit, Bill or Plaint, in any of his Majesty's Courts at Westminster wherein no Essoign, Protection or Wager of Law shall be allowed, nor any more than one Imparllance.

And it is hereby further enacted, That if any Action or Suit shall be commenced or brought against any Justice of Peace, Constable or other Officer, or Person whatsoever, for doing or causing to be done any Thing in pursuance of this Act, concerning the said Offences, the Defendant, in such Action, may plead the general Issue, and give the special Matter in Evidence: And if upon such Action, Verdict be given for the Defendant, or the Plaintiff become Nonsuit, or discontinue his Action, then the Defendant shall have treble Costs.

Provided always, and it is hereby enacted, That no Person shall be prosecuted or troubled for any Offence against this Statute, unless the same be proved or prosecuted within ten Days next after the Offence committed.

And it is further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be publickly read four several Times in the Year in all Parish Churches, and all publick Chappels, immediately after Morning Prayer, on four several Sundays, that is to say, The Sunday next after the 24th Day of June, the 29th Day of September, the 25th Day of December, and the 25th Day of March, under the Pain of Twenty Shillings for every such Omission or Neglect.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Justice of Peace, Mayor or other head Officer shall register in a Book, to be kept for that Purpose, all the Convictions made before him upon this Act, and the Time of

making

making thereof, and for what Offence, and shall certify the same to the next General Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the said County or Place, where the Offences are committed, to be there kept upon Record by the respective Clerks of the Peace, to be seen without Fee or Reward.

Thus we see the Duty of both Magistrates and People; the one to forsake, or be punish'd; the other to punish, or be fin'd: That the People don't voluntarily obey, is their own Fault; but that they are not made to obey, is the Magistrates; whose criminal Neglect herein shall one Day be severely punish'd by that Judge who is no Respector of Persons (*Wis. vi. 7.*) who destroy'd Sodom and Gomorrah with Destruction by Fire from Heaven for the vile Practice of Sodomy; a Crime this, always worthy of Death, and was so punish'd under the Levitical Institution, (*Lev. xx. 13.*) which, yet in these Days, is by much too lightly regarded; Where then I beseech you is Christian Zeal now? Therefore to the Magistrates, such I mean as are justly chargeable with this criminal Omission, do I now address myself, earnestly beseeching them so to consider their own Happiness, and that of their Fellow Creatures, as not to suffer them to be ruin'd by their Neglect, lest the Heathens rise up in Judgment against them, and condemn them. Wherefore, hear the Word of the Lord, ye Magistrates and Rulers of the People; thus saith the Lord, *Whether ye will hear, or whether ye will forbear, yet shall ye know, That I am God, and there is none else; I kill, and I make alive; and there is none that can deliver out of mine Hand:* Will you not hear my Voice, and tremble at my Words? saith the Lord; *For they that Honour me I will Honour, but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed;* blessed is the Man that doeth this, and the Son of Man that layeth hold on it; *That keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his Hand from doing any Evil; that looses the Bands of Wickedness,*

and lightens the heavy Burdens of the Afflicted, and lets the Oppress'd go free, and breaks the Yoke of Iniquity; and also, That thou deal thy Bread to the Hungry, and assist the Poor in his Distress; when thou seest the Naked, that thou cover him, and shut not thine Ears against the Cry of the Indigent: Then shall thy Light break forth as the Morning, and thine Health shall spring forth speedily; thy Righteousness shall go before thee, and the Glory of the Lord shall be thy Re-reward; thou shalt call upon him, and he shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here am I. But if ye will not obey my Voice, saith the Lord, know for certain that ye shall utterly perish from off the Face of the Earth, and thy going hence shall be unto eternal Woe and Misery, when thine own Wickedness shall correct thee, and thy Back-sliding shall condemn thee; then shalt thou know and see, that it is an evil Thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my Fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts." This is the Threatning of the Almighty, and there is but one Decree for you, for the irreversible Sentence is already pass'd; namely, That every one shall be rewarded according to his Deeds, and they that have done Good, shall go into Life everlasting; but they that have done Evil, into everlasting Fire."

Consider these Things therefore, I earnestly intreat you, and permit not the Lord's People still to Transgress, by suffering them to go on in their Sins unrepov'd, lest thou thereby, through thy Silence, or Forbearance, destroy thy Brother for whom Christ died: Remember, I beseech you, the End of your Trust, which, as the Apostle has well express'd it, *Is, namely, for the Punishment of Evil Doers, and the Praise of them that do Well:* And was there ever more Necessity to punish Evil Doers than now? Consider how miserably Christianity suffers by this Neglect,

Neglect, how grievously Christ is abus'd, and Mens Souls lost, running head-long into their own Ruin for want of being timely restrain'd: Our Prisons and Places of Execution sufficiently bears Witness to the Truth of these Things, and the Living greatly suffer thereby: And what Evil does it not bring upon the Earth! Is not this the Cause of that heinous Sin, Perjury, so frequently complained of in these Days? Whereby the Innocent are destroy'd, while the Guilty go free; for how can it be suppos'd, That he who makes no Conscience of Swearing in common, should avoid it when the Hope of Gain is present?

Consider then once more how much it is in your Power to do Service to *Yourselves*, your *Fellow Creatures*, your *King*, and your *Country*; for Vice being suppress'd by your Industry, great will be your Reward Hereafter, and much Happiness to your Fellow Creatures Here: Ten thousand Robberies, Rapes, inhuman Murders, and untimely Deaths would be happily prevented; while Unity, Peace and Love would flourish among Christians; in Proportion to the Improvement of Piety and Virtue; many also would be reduced to be good Subjects to his Majesty, useful Members in Society, and beneficial to the Publick, whom now are governed only by their own corrupt Passions and Lusts, *the Bane of all Happiness, and the Root of all Evil*, which drives them head-long into Eternal Ruin: And will not the Consideration of these Things excite you to lay hold of the Opportunity of doing so much Good to Mankind in general, and to Yourselves in particular? Then verily, nothing will; and the Nation will be involv'd in Impiety and Wickedness, and you will be the Cause of its Ruin; which will heap unto Yourselves Wrath, against the Day of Wrath; and plunge you so much the deeper into the horrible Gulf of Eternal Torments: As therefore, you would approve Yourselves *Loyal Subjects, Faithful Majestates, and Good Christians*; yea, as you regard your own Immortal Interest, and the Happiness of

your Fellow Creatures, consider, observe, and practice what is here advis'd, and it shall be your Wisdom, and turn to your Eternal Joy.

The great King *Nebuchadnezzar* is very commendable in this; namely, that he bless'd the God of Heaven, and threatned Destruction to those who should speak "any Thing amiss against him, whom, *says he*, I praise, extol, and honour, all whose Works are Truth, and his Ways Judgment, and those that walk in Pride he is able to abase," (*Dan. iii. 28, 29, and iv. 37.*)

And how happy! yea, how very happy a Nation and People should we be, if His Majesty would be pleased to renew that ancient and most excellent Decree of *Darius the Median* (and would to God it might be so) namely, "That in every Dominion of his Kingdom, Men should Tremble and Fear before the God of Heaven; who is the Living God, and steadfast for ever, and his Kingdom, that which shall not be destroy'd; but his Dominion shall be even unto the End" (*Dan. vi. 26.*) For then (*and not till then I Fear*) shall we see Religion flourish in its native Lustre; and God would be worshipp'd in the Beauty of Holiness! Yea, Piety and Truth would embrace each other, and the Lord, the God of Hosts himself, would surely be for us, and who then could be against us!

True Religion, is the best Preservative of a Nation from Violence and Destruction (*Prov. xiv. 34. Jerem. xviii. 7, 8.*) as preserving its Members in all Loyal and Dutiful Obedience to their Sovereign, as the Precepts thereof requires; and while Piety sits at the Helm of a Kingdom, Peace and Prosperity is transfus'd throughout each Part thereof.

Good King *Jehoshaphat* was doubtless very sensible of this, while he gives Charge to the Judges, "That they should take Heed of Right in their Judgment; as not judging for Men but for the Lord, with whom there was no Respect of Persons; or taking of Gifts," (*2 Chron. xix. 6, 7.*)

Where-

Wherefore, kind Reader, I earnestly intreat you to reflect upon these Things seriously, as being mostly becoming your Care and Wisdom diligently to consider: *Believe me*, I have no other Interest in recommending them to you, than for the Good of your immortal Soul; which I very greatly *thirst* and long after.

Follow not therefore a Multitude to do Evil; let not the wicked Examples of Others draw you into your own Ruin; fly from Sin, as from the Face of a most cruel devouring Serpent; consider, it will be no Alleviation of thy Torments, when in the State of the Damn'd, to have many thy Companions there, who were once thy *Associates* in Sin here.

And now, Christian Reader, having thus far reflected upon the Necessity and great Benefit of Religion in General; it remains,

Tenthly. That your Duty herein be more particularly consider'd in Respect to your Family; wherein especial Care should always be had, That they be well instructed in the Faith and Fear of God, as the only Means to make them Happy, Here and Hereafter.

The Seal of God's Covenant to *Abraham*, equally respected his Servants as himself (*Gen. xvii. 11, 12, 13.*) he was commanded to regard them as well as his Children: And God mentions it as a Thing well pleasing unto Him, That He *knew Abraham, that he would command his Children and Household after him, that they should fear the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment* (*Gen. xviii. 19.*) And *Cornelius's* Praise is written in The Book of Life, *Because he feared God with all his House* (*Acts x. 1, 2, 3, 4*) and you also, if you would approve yourself a true Christian, and be rewarded as such, must worship God with all thy House.

Christ died for all, as the Soul of the Son, so also the Soul of the Servant is His: Thy Servants have Souls to be sav'd as well as thou, and to allow them only Food and Raiment, is to have but little more Regard to them, than to the

Beasts that perish; but so long as they continue under thy Direction, God has made thee a Watchman over their Souls, and requires, That you should be equally careful of their spiritual Welfare as of your own, (*S. Matt. xxii. 39. S. James i. 8.*) and *instruct them in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*; daily improving them herein, not only by calling upon them to attend Divine Worship at Church (*unto which they should be admitted every Sabbath at least*) but also to join with you in Prayer at Home, which ought carefully to be us'd by every Head of the Family, at least once a Day, but rather twice, *especially on the Lord's Day*; together with the attentive Hearing the Word of God, *which ought to be read daily*; with a strict Admonition also, that they neglect not their Private Devotions Morning and Evening, which is the indispensable Duty of all: Unto whose Use the following Prayer is recommended, if they are not otherways better provided.

A Prayer to be used Morning and Evening.

O Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three Persons in one God; have Mercy upon me, a miserable Sinner. Prevent me, O Lord, I humbly beseech thee; in all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, with thy most gracious Favour; and he pleased mercifully to further me in thy Ways, with thy continual Help, daily improving me in the Knowledge and Practice of all Things, that may mostfly tend to promote thy Glory, the Good of my Fellow Creatures, and my own eternal Happiness. And O! my God; who delighteth not in the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should turn from his evil Way and live; leave me not, I humbly beseech thee, to mine own Ways, but let thy Word be a Lamp unto my Feet, and a Light unto my Paths; and give me the Spirit of entire Submission and Resignation to thy Divine Will, that whatsoever Station or Condition of Life thy Providence shall be pleased to allot for me, I may be therewith content.

Sixth Gift of Theophilus Philanthropos.

And as thou, O Lord God Almighty, knowest the Secrets of the Heart, and art able to guide and govern it according to thy good Pleasure; O! therefore be favourable unto me, I earnestly entreat thee, and remove far from me all Pride, Vain-Glory, Envy, Hatred, Malice, and all Uncharitableness; and so direct me by thy Holy Spirit, that in all my Works begun, continued, and ended in thee, I may glorify thy Holy Name; and finally by thy Mercy obtain everlasting Life, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord; in whose most blessed Name and Words, I further beseech thee to be merciful unto me, and to all thy People; especially do I humbly recommend to thy peculiar Favour and Love, Direction and Protection, my Friends, Relations, Benefactors, and Well wishers, saying: Our Father, which art in Heaven; Hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this Day our daily Bread. And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into Temptation; but deliver us from Evil: For thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Almighty God, Father of all Mercies; I thine unworthy Servant, do give thee most humble and hearty Thanks, for all thy Goodness and loving Kindness to me and to all Men: I bless thee for my Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life, which from Time to Time thou hast most graciously conferr'd upon me; but above all, for thine inestimable Love, in the Redemption of the World, by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Means of Grace, and for the Hopes of Glory; and I beseech thee to give me that due Sense of all thy Mercies, that my Heart may be unfeignedly thankful, and that I may shew forth thy Praise, not only with my Lips, but more especially in my Life, by giving up myself to thy Service, and by walking before thee, in Holiness and Righteousness all my Days, through Jesus Christ our Lord: And vouchsafe,

O blessed God, to receive these my Supplications and Prayers, which at this Time I have humbly offered unto thy Divine Majesty; and grant that among the various and manifold Changes and Chances of this Mortal Life, my Heart may always surely there be fixt, where true Joys are only to be found; which I humbly beg for the sake of thy well-beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, both now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

This, or some other Prayer, I say, let them be careful reverently to use upon their Knees, Morning and Evening; who should likewise be advis'd diligently to read the Sacred Scripture all Opportunities; and that, not as a common or ordinary Book, to be used indifferently with Carelessness, but with Reverence and due Regard, esteeming it, as in Truth it is, the Voice of God, revealing his Will to them thereby: Therefore the better to prepare their Minds for a due Improvement and Instruction from what they read, they would do well before they begin, devoutly upon their Knees to use the following Petition.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our Instruction, grant that I may in such wise hear them, read, observe, learn and inwardly digest them; that by Patience and Comfort of thy Holy Word, I may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed Hope of everlasting Life, which thou hast given me in my Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Wherein Parents should also be most solicitous and careful to instruct their Children, that from their Childhood they may know the Holy Scripture, which is the best Treasure that their Minds can be furnish'd with, and will be of lasting Use and Benefit to them, as being the greatest Preservative against the Temptations of Satan, and the chiefest of Remedies to cure the Wounds of the Soul,

Soul, which Ignorance and Error hath planted there: It is therefore the Supreme of all Books, wherein Life and Immortality is brought to Light; what greater Benefit therefore can Parents bestow upon their Children, than daily to exercise their Minds in the Knowledge of the Sacred Scripture? Wherefore, I earnestly beseech and entreat them, That as they regard both the present and future Happiness of their Children, they would give all Diligence, carefully to instruct them herein. Children are not capable of chusing for themselves, and readily imbibe any thing that is administered to them, whether it be Good or Bad; surely then, it very greatly behoves Parents to chuse that which is best for them, and to instruct them in the Way to Immortality while they are yet Young, that they may never after depart from it. The Holy Scripture, therefore, is of all other Things the most proper for this Purpose; wherein they are taught the true Sense of their Dependency upon God; of their Duty to their Parents; of their Love to their Fellow Creatures, and of the Regard due to Themselves to live as becometh the Gospel of Christ.

And now, might I advise herein, I would earnestly recommend to Parents, that they let no Day slip, without some Part of it being employ'd by their Children in reading the Sacred Scripture, and also writing out some of the most useful Precepts thereof, which would both fix it strongly in their Memory, and also improve their Hand-writing, if carefully attended to; believe me, Parents, I beseech you, and let me not speak *into the Air*: There is no greater Benefit you can possibly bestow upon your Children than a Pious Education; be careful then, to Arm them with a due Reverence towards God, and a decent Behaviour in His Sacred Tabernacle; suffer them not to follow the too general and shameful Custom of the present Age, of behaving themselves with Irreverence and Carelessness, nor sitting while the Most High God is prais'd in the Voice

of the *Psalms*; which however common, (*it is with Grief that I speak it*) tends greatly to the Scandal of Christian Worship: It is a Sin and Scandal, and we must not follow a Multitude to do Evil: An irreverent and sluggish Behaviour in the House of God, is not to Worship Him, but to Reproach and presumptuously Affront Him: To Worship God, is the most solemn Thing in the World, and should be done in the most solemn and decent Manner, with all the Heart and Affections; and so far as it deviates from this, so far it is imperfect and ineffectual, if not vain and sinful; as most certainly it is, when done either out of Custom or with Carelessness.

Thus instructing Children while they are Young in the Precepts of God, and how decently to Worship Him; they will nobly improve with the Increase of Years, in giving the Lord *the Honour due unto His Name, and worshipping the Lord with Holy Worship*; and their Parents will be more gratefully remembered by them in nothing, than their Care of their Religious Education, in that they now find by Experience; *That a merciful God is the best Treasure; and to be accepted by Him, the supremest Happiness*: And from a due Sense hereof, they will teach their Children the same, and their Children the fourth Generation: Thus Piety will increase, to the Glory of God; and you, as being primarily Instrumental herein, shall in no wise lose your Reward: Be intreated then, I beseech you, to make Trail of the Truth of what is here recommended, and if you don't find it turn greatly to your Benefit, then let me bear the blame for ever.

And now, perhaps, it may be thought by some that I ought to have said something concerning the Duty of Children to their Parents; but as here I have mention'd only one Part of a Parent's Duty, *among many*, I must defer the Rest to some other Opportunity; when I shall, *Divine Grace assisting me*, consider it more fully, together with the Duty of Children to their Parents:

rents; in the mean Time, let them be carefully diligent in acquainting themselves with the Sacred Scripture, from whence they will abundantly be inform'd of this Particular, and convinc'd of the great Necessity of observing it: The Sacred Scripture, *I say*, let them be carefully instructed in, which I can't too much recommend, in regard of its mighty Use and Benefit, both for the Present and Future Happiness of Mankind: This is the Pearl of great Price; the inestimable Treasure of the Soul, sent to us from Heaven to teach us the Way thither: It is a Guide to our Paths to keep us from Error; the Key of Heaven to admit us into Bliss; our Comfort in Affliction; our Shield and Sword against *Satan*, whereby we shall always be able to overcome him: It is the School of Prudence; the Fountain of Wisdom; Spring of Understanding, and Stream of Knowledge; wherein whatsoever is necessary to be believ'd, desir'd, or hop'd for, is contain'd: It is the Mirror wherein we behold the Face of God, by the Works of His Providence, and receive Testimony from thence in Favour of our Future Happiness, by the great Things He has done for us: How then can the Excellency of this Divine Book be too much esteem'd, or too earnestly recommended? Wherein the Spring of Piety, and Fountain of Heavenly Knowledge is contain'd; whereby the Mind may be enlighten'd with Divine Wisdom, and the Soul enrich'd with an Immortal Treasure; *This is a Lamp unto the Feet and a Light unto the Paths*; and is profitable for *Direction, Correction, and Instruction in the Way of Righteousness*: Here we are taught the Knowledge of all Things that are necessary, both for the Life that now is, and for that which is to come; which therefore we are advis'd to search by its Divine Author, and the Holy Pen-Men thereof; (*Deut. vi 6, 7, Isa. xxxiv. 16. S. Job. v. 39. Acts. xvii. 11. 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16. 2 Tim. iii. 14, 15, 16.*) and invited by its self, to listen to its Heavenly Doctrine, as that which

will make us wise unto Salvation: (*Deut. xxxii. 1, 2. Isa. lv. 1, 2 3.*) Here it is, we become acquainted with God and his Attributes, of *whom*, the more we know, the greater is our Joy and Tranquility of Soul, and the surer our Protection from all Evil: How invaluable then is, the Excellency of this Divine Book, which contains such an inestimable Treasure of Immortal Knowledge! And in Comparison to which, all other Writings, even the best Extent, are but as so many small Streams flowing from a large Fountain, like as a Branch of the Sea, is to the Sea it self: And if those who are so apt to suggest the Sufficiency of the Sacred Scripture, as making it unnecessary for other Writings, would observe it themselves, and be guided by its Precepts, their Plea would be Just, and themselves Happy; but because their Lives are very contrary hereto, and their Approbation of it only consists in Words, it therefore becomes necessary for other Exhortations, and has, among other Things, been the Occasion of this present Writing; wherein, I would earnestly from my Soul, recommend above all Things, the diligent Study of the Sacred Scripture, as the most excellent and most valuable of all other Books in the World, and mostly becoming the Wisdom and Prudence of all, to make it their first and principal Care to be well acquainted therewith, least their Ignorance herein, be also one Day reprov'd, as has been that of others by Christ himself (*S. Mark xiii. 10, 24, 27. S. Luk. xxiv. 25.*)

Happy therefore are those that are daily exercis'd in this Divine Study; yea, blessed are they that meditateth in it Day and Night; which carefully to observe and practice, is the Glory of Youth, and the Crown of Old Age; bringing Peace and Comfort here, and Eternal Rest in the World to come. In which Sacred Writings, although many Things are contain'd above the Understanding of common Capacities; yet whatsoever is necessary for *Direction, Correction, and Instruction, in the Way of Righteousness and Salvation*, is plain and

and conspicuous to the meanest Understandings; which therefore, Servants as well as others, should be advis'd for their Soul's Benefit, carefully to read at all Opportunities; which therefore, their Masters or Superiors would do well to furnish them with.

Thus should be the Care of every Superior or Head of a Family, to instruct their Household in the Faith and Fear of God; which however it be lightly esteem'd in this degenerate and luke-warm Age of Christianity, *which is almost ripe for Judgment*, is notwithstanding a Neglect, for which they shall one Day be severely accountable; and the Loss of any one Soul occasion'd thereby, will surely then be requir'd at their Hands, and very greatly add to the Punishment of their Condemnation: Wherefore, I beseech you seriously to think upon these Things, and no longer neglect the Spiritual Welfare of your Servants; but have Regard to them according to the Divine Commandment, and give unto them that which is Just, even Cloathing for their Souls, remembring, *That you also have a Master in Heaven, by whom you are requir'd so to do.* (Ephes. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1.) Consider, their Happiness is as dear to them, as thine is to thee, and when lost through your Neglect, what can you render to them as a Recompence for the same? Are you angry with them for disobeying your Commands? And shall not God be much more so with you, when, through your Means, they are deprived, either of the Power or Opportunity of performing unto Him what He requires of them?

To instruct the Ignorant in the Fear of the Lord, is an Office not unbecoming the greatest Monarch, much less ought those of an inferior Condition to be ashamed thereto: Upon the Sabbath at least, they ought surely to have Time for Religious Duties, and to attend the Publick Worship of God; and for this Purpose, many Things necessary upon other Days, should upon this Day be dispens'd with; as much Cooking, long Meals, Visiting, and such like: That so

they may be at more Leisure, to attend upon those Things, which concerns their Soul's Interest; for how can it be suppos'd, That a Servant, after having long attended the Table, should afterwards have sufficient Time to *Dine*, and prepare for Church? And what is this but to prefer the Gratification of thy Appetite, before thy Servant's immortal Interest, and to set it up in Opposition to God's Commands? Truly how pleasant and delightful soever such Food may seem to be at present, yet hereafter it will be found to be but *Gall* and *Worm-wood* to the Soul, and as so much *Poison* to the Body to procure its Destruction.

That those who are careless and indifferent about Religion should be guilty of this Crime, by not minding whether their Servants attend Church or no, or what becomes of their immortal Souls, is not so much to be wonder'd at, as having little or no Regard for their own; but that those who seem to be otherwise affected, should be guilty thereof, is as unaccountable as it is sinful, and as unworthy a Christian as it is destructive to Piety; which ought therefore to be abhorr'd and forsaken by all: Is there any Mercy greater than that which regards the Soul's Happiness? Yet how often is this neglected by those who talk much of Mercy! A merciful Man, *say they*, is merciful to his Beast: In these, therefore, who seem to have such a due Sense of Mercy, we might reasonably hope to find a noble Example thereof: But how are we deceiv'd! How unhappy is the Disappointment, when in many Instances we find them acting the direct contrary: Behaving themselves with much Moroseness and Ill-nature towards their Servants; frequently displeas'd at they know not what, and requiring of them more than they are able to perform; not allowing them so much as Time to think of the great End for which they were created, much less to prepare for it: No, nor even shewing a suitable Pity and Compassion towards them when afflicted with Illness, but are presently displeas'd and think of removing them out of their Houses!

Houses ! And yet these are they who talk of Mercy towards Beasts, who themselves want common Humanity towards their Fellow Creatures.

And here, while I reflect upon the unhappy Frailty of Human Nature, could I be excus'd by the very Aged, of being thought guilty of an unpardonable Presumption, I might address myself to them in a few Words ; requesting, That they would not be so much troubled about the Thoughts of leaving this World ; I mean, That they would not be so very suspicious of others wishing for their Death, as some are apt to be, to the great Disquieting of themselves, and those about them : What Unhappiness does this not create ! while the earnest Desires of others in wishing for their Health and Happiness, is construed by them as desiring nothing but their Death ! If they tell them thus much ; namely, That they wish them many Years of Peace and Tranquility, Joy and Prosperity, then they are accus'd of Fawning and Flattery ; if they are silent about it, then they are deem'd cold and indifferent in their Affections towards them : And who knows how to behave themselves in such an intricate Case ! The great Weaknesses and many Infirmities that naturally attend old Age, are doubtless better felt than can be express'd, and are greatly deserving Pity and tender Regard from all : But are such Thoughts the natural Result of Years ? If so, O ! who would not dread to be Old ! which yet, I can no more believe, than that minor Years, should bespeak a Person to be a Fool, only because he is Young : Yet I mean not hereby in the least to reflect upon any of the Aged, whom I desire always greatly to reverence and esteem, even for their Years, according to Divine Command, (*Lev. xix. 23.*)

But now to return. I can't here but remark the unhappy and criminal Neglect of some Masters towards their Bond-servants, those, *I mean*, commonly call'd *Blacks* or *Negroes* ; who are so far from permitting them the Benefits of Religion,

that they will not suffer them to be baptiz'd : Such Masters surely know not what Manner of Spirit they are of, neither do I know what to think of them, whether their Condition be better than the Slaves they keep in Ignorance or no : It would be a Scandal to Christianity to call them Christians, since they differ so much from the Mind of their great Author, *Christ*, who commanded his Disciples to baptize all Nations ; and pressed nothing more earnestly than Love, which he calls a new Commandment, in Respect of its universal Extent, which was peculiar to Christians alone : The *Jews* loved their Neighbours, and so do the *Turks* and *Pagans* at this Day ; but a *Christian's* Love is to be General, and extend to all Mankind, Enemies as well as Friends, after the Example of *Christ*, who loved all Mankind, and gave his Life for them ; and has constituted Love as a distinguishing Character of Christianity, by which Christians should be known from other People, in seeking by Love and good Offices to win others to Happiness, even as *Christ* came to enlighten the Blind from their Darkness of Error, and call Sinners to Repentance : And so far as a Person recedes from this Disposition, even so far he is from being a true Christian : How then can these Men be called Christians, who instead of longing for their Fellow Creatures Happiness, and using Means to obtain it, as the Example of *Christ* requires, on the contrary deprive them of the Power of becoming Christians ? Oh ! inhuman Cruelty, which can't be sufficiently exploded, or enough lamented : How joyful a Thing should it be esteem'd, to save a Soul from eternal Death ! How pleasant an Exercise to instruct the Ignorant in the Fear of the Lord ! How great is the Reward of such Labour ! And how noble the Encouragement thereto : Heaven is offer'd for an Inducement to it, and a Crown of immortal Glory for a Recompence : How is it then that such mighty Rewards don't engage a Person to obtain them ? Why do they keep their Fellow Creatures in Ignorance ?

Why

Why do they deprive them of Christian Knowledge? Or restrain them from Baptism, and embracing the Christian Faith? Why! Because, *say they*, They would then be Christians, and think themselves free from an Obligation of perpetual Servitude: A strange Reason indeed! But who ever claim'd it? Or by what Right can it be claim'd? Are they not sold for their Lives? And what? Does Christianity free them from the Duty of Servitude? No, verily; no otherwise than a Person that is hired for one or a greater Number of Years, is exempted from Labour, because he's a Christian: Christianity therefore don't free them from an Obligation of Servitude, but lightens their Burden, by the Hopes of Joy and Comfort, and a Prospect of eternal Reward, whereby they become more submissive and obedient to their Masters: It changes their slavish Fear into a filial Love, and their Obedience is now, not extorted by Fear, as before, but engaged by Love and a Desire of Pleasing, as Christianity requires; and the more so, as they improve in the Knowledge of the Christian Faith, for the best Christians are always the most faithful Servants; and being Servants for Life, they patiently submit to it, remembering the Apostle's Words, *He that is called in the Lord, being a Servant, is the Lord's Freeman*; therefore *art thou called*, being a Servant, *care not for it*, but remain patiently in thy Calling; *looking for the blessed Hope and glorious Appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; when the faithful Servant shall be made Free, and inherit Eternal Life. Wherefore, O ye Masters and Mistresses, consider the great Injury you do these poor Slaves in keeping them in Ignorance; and the Sin you are guilty of hereby: God wills not the Death of a Sinner; and Christ requires we should follow his Example in seeking the Happiness of all, and will you not obey? they have no other Means of coming to the Knowledge of Christianity but thro' your Assistance; and will you not assist

them? How then are you Christians? Do you expect Mercy from God at the great Day of Judgment, when you shew no Mercy to your Fellow Creatures? Will they not then rise up in Judgment against you, and condemn you? Who made you to differ from them? Or what have you, that you did not receive from God? Wherefore then do you rebel against His Commands, in refusing Mercy to your Fellow Creatures? Verily, your Condition is much worse than theirs, whose Ignorance will plead Compassion for them before the Bar of Justice, while you, *because you would shew no Mercy, shall have Judgment without Mercy*: Consider these Things therefore of which you are here friendly advis'd; and be Friends to yourselves by shewing Mercy to your Fellow Creatures: Let your *Negroes* every One of them be carefully instructed in the Knowledge of Christianity, and admitted into the Christian Faith by Baptism: So shall you approve yourselves Christians indeed, and God will be your Rewarder: But if you will still continue rebellious against Him, by the Neglect of this great Duty; remember you have here in Love been admonished against the Consequences of it; which you will assuredly find true to your Eternal Sorrow; when that dreadful Sentence shall be pronounced upon you; *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels, there shall be Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth*.

Eleventhly. Having now consider'd the Duty of Masters to their Servants, it remains that something also be advis'd to Servants, concerning their Duty to their Masters: And here, I earnestly intreat and exhort Servants to a tender and careful Regard to the Will of their Superiors, as is requir'd of them by Divine Command. (*Ephes. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8. Col. iii. 22, 23, 24, 25. 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19, 20, 21.*)

Let them be carefully diligent to obey them in all Lawful Things, with Silence and Submission, how contrary soever they

they be to their own Desires or natural Inclinations; always patiently bearing with their Infirmities or peevish Dispositions, without increasing their Anger by various Replies, which some are too apt to do, and which by woeful Experience has been found to be the Cause of much Contention and Debate; this for the Sake of Christ I exhort them to, who requires this of them, in Obedience to His Commands, who has suffered so much for them (*Isa. liii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. S. Mat. xi. 29.*)

Is their Treatment hard and severe, and their Necessities great and many? Yet Christ has suffered much more; whom if they be careful to imitate by a patient Submission to the Divine Will, they may assuredly Comfort themselves with this Consideration; That all their Necessities will soon end, in an Eternity of Joy and unspeakable Bliss; where all Tears shall be wiped from the Eyes, and all Sorrow for ever banish'd from the Heart: Wherefore, let them give all possible Diligence to obtain a perfect Victory over their Passions, that it may not grieve them to submit to the Humours of Others, how odd or unaccountable soever they be; as also, that neither Malice, nor Wrath, *which are as Wounds destroying the Peace of the Soul*, may find the least Room in their Breasts; lest *Satan* take Occasion hereby to destroy them for ever; who, not being Ignorant of the Power he has over the Mind when oppress'd with immoderate Anger, has of en-times caus'd even good Persons grievously to offend hereby; for Anger is the Fury of Human Nature, and nothing tends more to its Destruction than this unhappy Passion when immoderate; it is the worst of Frensies, and it deprives a Person of his Reason, and drives him to desperate Things; even as a Mad man, having War in his Heart, is pleas'd with nothing more than casting about *Fire-brands, Arrows, and Death*; so is a Person depriv'd of his Reason by Immoderate Anger: Therefore should it be so much the more carefully guarded

against as the great Bane of the Soul's Happiness, and destructive to Christian Virtues; for how commendable soever a Person may be at other Times for his Piety and good Actions, yet all is blemish'd by this injurious Passion, whereby he is guilty of Things, utterly unworthy Human Nature, much more a Christian; hence the Apostle has told us, *That he which seems to be Religious and bridleth not his Tongue, that Man's Religion is vain.* (*S. James i. 26.*) Christ is propos'd as our Pattern to imitate, as well in the Spirit of Meekness, as in all other Virtues, without which we cannot be his Disciples: There is nothing therefore more becoming a Christian, than Meekness and Good-nature; a regular Government of the Passions, and a due Regard to Speech, so as to be angry and sin not; because by our Words we shall be either justified or condemned, (*S. Matt. xii. 37.*) says the Author of Life.

Wherefore, being sensible of the Necessity and great Benefit of these Things, namely, The Overcoming our unruly Passions; and yet, of the Difficulty of performing them, as being contrary to the natural Disposition of the Mind, *which is prone to Evil, as the Sparks fly upwards*; I do again earnestly entreat them, as they regard the Love of God and the Comforts of eternal Life, That they be perswaded to think upon, and observe what is here friendly advis'd, *And in their Patience to possess their Souls*; living in Love and Unity together, as Brethren, professing the same Faith in *Christ*, patiently bearing with each other's Infirmities, without Strife or Debate; always remembering, That it is much more becoming the Disposition of a Christian, silently to pass over small Offences, then to use the Power of revenging them, (*Rom. xii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, 21.*) *Grievous Words*, says the wise Hebrew, *stir up Strife, but a soft Answer turneth away Wrath*, (*Prov. xv. 1.*) Love and Unity, even as Virtue which has its own Reward, recommends

mends itself to all, for its great Excellency and natural Tendency to make Men happy: *Yea*, what Happiness, what social Society can there be without it? *Behold*, says the Psalmist *how good and joyful a Thing it is, for Brethren to dwell together in Unity: (Psal. cxxxiii. 1.)* Love (as I said before) is the distinguishing Character of Christianity, frequently pressed by our blessed Lord to his Followers, as that whereby we should be distinguish'd from the Rest of Mankind; and it is in vain to pretend to Christianity, while the Mind is a Stranger to this Virtue: Many and strong are the Motives pressing hereto; for as Strife and Debate will increase unto more Ungodliness, and even as Malice and Ill-nature brings with it its own Punishment, and heaps up Wrath against the Day of Wrath; so on the contrary, Love and Unity stirs up to Piety, and the Promotion of every good Work: Therefore it is highly commend- ed by the *Psalmist (Psal. cxxxiii. 1, 2, 3.)* earnestly recommended and prayed for by Christ, (*S. John xiv. 34, 35. and xvii. 20, 21.*) vehemently urged by the great Apostle St. Paul, (*1 Cor. i. 10*) preached by the beloved Disciple St. John, as absolutely necessary to eternal Life, (*1 John iv. 7, 8, 11, 20, 21.*) and carefully practis'd by the primitive *Christians (Acts iv. 32)* This makes us Professors of one Faith; Worshipers of one God; Children of one Parent; Brethren of one Christ; Companions of one Holy Ghost: And finally, Heirs of one Kingdom, and Possessors of eternal Joy.

See here then the great Excellency of this Virtue, which if Servants would carefully observe, those unhappy Disputes and Animosities so common among them, would have an End; and was it more universally esteem'd among Mankind, Christianity would be more generally practis'd, neither would they any longer bite and devour one another: But how necessary soever this Duty is to others, yet more especially does it concern those who are Preachers of Righteousness and Reprovers of Vice, to be

exercis'd herein; studiously directing their Steps in the Paths of Virtue, and walking as becometh *Saints*; for the World is never more curious and circumspect, than in prying into the Conduct of those by whom she is reprov'd; and the least Miscarriage of such is proclaim'd upon the House-top, and magnified an hundred Fold; which declares the absolute Necessity of good Examples as well as Precepts; without which, even an *Angel's* Exhortation to Obedience, would be but of very little Use; for Example is the Life and Soul of *Religion*, and without which, Christianity can never be promoted, nor Vice suppress'd; which all therefore should be earnestly exhorted to, and none more than Servants, that they may animate one another hereby, to a patient Continuance in Well doing; wherein *that they may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing*; I would, to what is already advis'd, earnestly recommend this also, as greatly necessary carefully to be observ'd; namely, To use Grace before and after Meat, as the Example of *Christ* requires (*S. Mark viii. 6. S. John vi. 11. Acts xvii. 35.*) which Duty, not only among them, but also among many others, is I fear, very greatly neglected; whom therefore we would recommend to the Beasts of the Field and Fowls of the Air, to learn the Spirit of Gratitude, and the Duty of Thankfulness (*Job xii. 7, 8, 9. Isa. i. 3.*) but even among some of those, who are not altogether guilty of this Crime, something of Decency should be advis'd; who either sitting upon their Seats, like the Careless and Indolent, or else hanging down their Hands like a Sluggard, and drooping down their Heads like a Drone, while they speak unto God, with Eyes at the same Time fixt upon their Food, and Bodies bowing down towards it, seem as tho' they meant to worship the Creature, instead of the *Creator*; and whose Grace likewise, are only a few Words, hurried over as in a Hurdle; which though agreeable enough to the irreverent Gesture of their Bodies, yet

is it utterly unworthy the Acceptance of that God, who hates sluggish and lukewarm Affections, (*Prov. xv. 8. and xviii. 9. Rev. iii. 15, 16.*) but requires to be worshipp'd with our Bodies and Souls, which are his: And here likewise we cannot but admire at the Folly of those, who make some Pretence indeed to this Duty, but care not how it is done; a Child is call'd to perform it, who neither considers or knows what he is about, nor can others understand what he says! Rumbling over a few *inarticulate* Words, and then behold! the Office is done; an excellent Performance indeed! What strange unaccountable Notions must these People have of the Supreme Majesty, who thus presume to offer unto him that Service which they themselves despise and would reject with Contempt from their Fellow Creatures: We cannot therefore behave ourselves better in this Particular, than to follow the Example of Christ himself, who is set forth for our Imitation: O, but this is to be precise and singular, *say some*; yes, so is Piety itself; and what? Must it not therefore be practis'd? Yes, it is an Argument that it ought to be more generally us'd; and then it would be as precise and singular to neglect it.

And now, lest any who read what is here advis'd, *I mean as to Grace before and after Meat*, should be at a Loss what Words to use; the following is recommended to their daily Practice.

GRACE before Meat.

GOOD God be merciful unto us; pardon and deliver us from all our Sins; and sanctify thy Gifts to our Use, and us to thy Service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THANKSGIVING after Meat.

WE give thee humble Thanks, O merciful Lord, for this present Refreshment, which by thy Bounty we have receiv'd: Grant, that as we continually depend upon thee, so we may be guided

by thy Fear all our Days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

These Things being advis'd, it only remains that they be carefully observ'd, which will bring a sure Re-ompence of Reward to the Obedient, which God that cannot Lie, has promised: But if they be despis'd and reject'd, than nothing more remains, but a fearful looking for of terrible Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Disobedient.

Twelfthly. The last Motive to Piety which I shall at present offer, and which nearly concerns all, frequently to remember, is the Duration and Severity of the Punishment, unto which the Neglect and Contempt of Religion will most assuredly consign us.

And here, O *Christian Professor*, knowing the Terrors of the Lord, and that it is a fearful Thing, to fall into the Hands of the Living God, I do again, once more in Love, as greatly longing after your eternal Happiness, earnestly entreat you, for the Lord's sake, and for your own Soul's sake, not to be unmindful of what is here recommended to your Perusal, and most serious Consideration: Esteem it not, *I beseech you*, sufficient carelessly to peruse it over once, and think no more of it, but so carefully and frequently read, and reflect upon it, as to become sensible of the absolute Necessity of observing it; and for the future, refrain from, and abhor the vile Sins here adv's'd against; namely, The Sins of Omission, and wilful Neglect of your Duty to God, for why will you die in your Sins? *Tea rather*, Why will ye not speedily repent and live for ever? So shall you escape in the dreadful Day of Judgment, the Wrath and Indignation of your great Creator, who in his Anger is a consuming Fire, (*Deut. iv. 24. Mal. iv. 1. Heb. xii. 28, 29*) which therefore requires us with so much the more Diligence, always to be upon our Guard, that we incur not the Displeasure of so dreadful a Majesty. The chief End of our Creation, was to be made

Heirs

Heirs of eternal Happiness: But how greatly does it tend to the Shame and Reproach of Human Nature, to behold the whole Creation answering the End of Providence, in their several Capacities, Man only excepted! And that Man, the noblest and most excellent Part of God's Workmanship, should debase himself in this Thing below the meanest Animals, is a Thought, which, alas! is almost too amazing to be believ'd, could it by any Means be deny'd.

But, O Sinner! Consider, I beseech you, before it be too late, the Interest of your immortal Soul, and the dreadful Consequences attending the Neglect thereof: Behold! Eternity is before you, and there is but a Step between you and Death: O then! let the serious Consideration of the Shortness and Uncertainty of this Life, and the awakening Words of *Death, Judgment,* and *Eternity*, speedily to come, sink deep into your Soul, and move you so to live, as always to be prepar'd for your great Change: *Yea, I say,* let the Prospect of a miserable Eternity now at Hand, awaken your Mind from its Delirium of Sin and Folly, before it receives you into its Bosom: Look into the woeful Gulf of Misery, and behold the dreadful Consequences of Obstinacy and Rebellion; see there, the ten Thousand Times ten Thousand most miserable Wretches, in the uttermost Anguish of Soul and horrible Dispair, lost to all Eternity! Hark, how they bewail themselves in dismal Sighs and Shreeks, in fruitless Tears and bitter Lamentations! Behold, *I say,* the dreadful Sight, and let the Words of the Damn'd awaken you to Attention. O! miserable! unspeakably miserable and wretched that I am! who shall deliver me from the Eternity of these Torments! O! that ever I was born! that ever I liv'd to offend, to become thus intolerably miserable! Cursed be the Day wherein I was born! and cursed be those by whom I was conceiv'd! why did I not die from the Womb? why did I not give up the

Ghost in the Infancy of my Life? why did the Knees prevent me? or why the Breasts that I should suck? for now had I been Quiet and at Rest, yea, I had escaped this inconceivable Pain and Punishment, unto which, my Sins has now for ever consigned me! Now too late, alas! to my eternal Sorrow, I find by woeful Experience, that Blessed, and for ever Blessed and Happy are they, and only they, Who Fear God and keep his Commandments: Those whom we Fools, sometime since had in Derision and a Proverb of Reproach, whose Life we accounted Madness, and their End to be without Honour, how are they numbred among the Children of God, and their Lot is now among the Saints! glorious is their Condition, and unspeakable their Happiness! Lift up thine Eyes, behold and see the blessed Prospect! Observe there how they stand round about the splendid Throne of the Infinite Almighty Being, cloathed with immortal Joy, and Happiness fully possessing, as unspeakably Great and Infinite, as Hell is exquisitely miserable and eternal in Duration! O! how glorious and noble is the Sight! how melodious their Songs of repeated Hallelujahs! daily admiring, and still continuing to admire to all Eternity, the infinite Perfection of their Great Creator; while we, Unhappy! ah! too Unhappy and Miserable Wretches, are lost and undone for ever! The greater their Joy, and the more glorious the Prospect of their Happiness, so much the more does it add to our Torments and Misery, as being for ever, yea, for ever! banish'd from the Joy thereof: What hath Pride profited us? or what Good hath our Riches with our Vaunting brought us? truly, we have erred from the Truth, the Light of Righteousness hath not shin'd unto us, and the Son of Righteousness rose not upon us; we worried ourselves in the Way of Wickedness and Destruction, but as for the Way of the Lord we have not known it! Ah me! how have I hated Instruction, and despised Reproof! how have I rejected

the Paths of Virtue, and embrac'd Vice ! But now, alas ! my Punishment is come upon me, and I cannot escape it ; yea, an Eternity of Torments is my Portion. O Eternity ! thou dreadful Thought ! what ? after having endured the Wrath and Indignation of an angry Deity, for ten Thousand Times ten Thousand Millions of Ages, an Eternity of Torments too horrible to be expressed, still to come ! O that I was a Caterpillar ! a Worm ! or any Thing but what I am !

Here then, behold ! and see, all you that are still in a Condition of Repentance ; look upon my miserable Condition, consider it and be wise, lest you also come into this Place of Torments : Have you liv'd long in a sinful Course ? yet now you are call'd to Repentance : Have you been call'd before and would not hearken ? yet now obey, for there is still Hope ; make Speed therefore to Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the Dead, and Christ shall give thee Rest.

Behold here, I say, O Sinner ! consider the Language of the Damn'd, exhorting you to a speedy Repentance and Reformation, for Reasons sufficient, were it possible, to awaken the Heart of Stone : And will you not hear ? God himself now invites you to Happiness, and will you not obey ? Oh ! do not this abominable Thing which I hate, says he, but look unto me and be ye saved ; for I am God, and there is none else : Therefore give me thy Heart, keep my Commandments and live ; for I have no Pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, saith the Lord, but that he turn from his Way and live : Therefore, turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways, for why will ye die, O Sinners ? (Jer. xlv. 4. Isa. xlv. 22. Prov. xxiii. 26. and iv. 4. Eze. xxxiii. 11.) Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes : Cease to do Evil, learn to do Well ; seek Judgment, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow : Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; Though your Sins were as Scarlet, they

shall be as white as Snow ; and though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool, (Isa. i. 16, 17, 18.)

Rouse, rouse thy Soul then ; make Haste while Time and Health remains ; shake off thy Lethargy of Sin, and with hearty Repentance and Contrition of Soul, fling thyself into the Arms of thy merciful God, and with relenting Heart and weeping Eyes humbly confess and bewail thy Sins before him, O Immortal God ! Offended Majesty of Heaven ! Sensible by thy Grace of my Sins, I now fly to thee for Mercy ; Mercy, Mercy, Lord, I crave of thee ; O therefore, mercifully look upon me thy Handy-Work ; thy Creature, Lord, convicted of my Sin, and condemned by Conscience ; Miserable without thy Mercy, and undone for ever ; yet I beseech thee cast me not away from thy Presence, neither chasten me in thy heavy Displeasure, lest thou bring me to Nothing ; but according to thy Infinite Goodness, who desirest not the Death of a Sinner, but that he should turn from his Evil Way and live ; so have Mercy upon me, O ! thou worthy Judge of all Men, and suffer me not, I beseech thee, O Lord ! to fall under thy great Displeasure and heavy Indignation, but make me an happy Example of thy Favour and loving Kindness, who humbly implores thy Pardon for all my Sins past, which from Time to Time I have most grievously committed by Thought, Word or Deed against thy Divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy Wrath and Indignation against me ; I do earnestly repent, and am heartily sorry for these my Misdoings ; the Remembrance of them is grievous unto me, the Burden of them is intolerable : Yet, O God, most Holy ! O Lord, most Mighty ! O holy and most merciful Saviour ! Deliver me not over unto the bitter Pains of Eternal Death, but turn thou me, O Good Lord ! so shall I be turned ; and for thy Name's Sake forgive me all that is past : Thou knowest the Secrets of my Heart, O therefore ! Shut not thy Merciful Ears to my Prayers, but spare me, O Lord most Holy ! O God most Mighty ! O Holy and Merciful Father,

Father, thou worthy Judge Eternal! and suffer me not in my greatest Distress, to feel any Pangs of Death to fall from thee, who now turn to thee in Weeping, Fasting, and Prayer, beseeching thee for thy Son's Sake, to forgive me all that is past, for thou art a merciful God, full of Compassion, long Suffering, and of great Pity; thou sparest when I deserve Punishment, and in thy Wrath thinkest upon Mercy: Spare me therefore, good Lord; O! Spare me still; and grant that I may ever Hereafter serve and please thee in Newness of Life, to thy Honour and Glory; so shall I not be brought to Confusion, but by daily improving in thy Faith and Fear, I shall die in thy Favour, rest in thy Peace, and dwell with thee in Life everlasting. Amen.

Thus by truly confessing, bewailing, and forsaking your Sins; you will most assuredly, thro' Faith in Christ, by Free Grace, find Favour and get your Pardon seal'd in Heaven, before you go hence and be no more seen: Set about this Great Work therefore, this one Thing most necessary without any further Delay: Life is short and uncertain, and to postpone it a Day longer, may be a Day too late, and then, thou art lost and undone for ever; wherefore be persuaded to begin now with all thy Strength and Might, and then how difficult and burdensome soever the Task may be, yet Diligence will make it easy, and the Reward will infinitely recompence it; Hell will be avoided hereby, and Heaven obtain'd: Heaven is of no small Value, it is worthy thy uttermost Diligence and Industry to procure; and in order, as a necessary Ingredient hereto, it is requisite for you, not only to observe what is here advised your self, but also diligently to recommend it to others; esteeming it as the Voice of God, inviting you to Repentance and Salvation; but if you despise and reject it with Scorn and Contempt, be well assured that God Himself is despised and reproached hereby: Consider what I say, I beseech you, and accept of this friendly

Admonition without Displeasure, and let it have its due Effect upon the Mind, as being offered by Divine Command, (Lev. xvi. 17. 1 Tim. v. 20. S. Jam. iv. 17.) which if despised, will certainly in the End, turn to your Eternal Woe and Misery. (Jerem. ii. 19. and xi. 3. Prov. i. 24, 25, &c.)

And now my Answer to those who object against what is here advis'd, is earnestly to desire, that whatsoever is amiss, they would speedily amend, and add thereto, what Additions shall be necessary to make it more acceptable and useful to the Publick: It was an earnest longing Desire after the Happiness and Spiritual Welfare of my Fellow Creatures, for whom I am willing to spend and be spent, that first mov'd me to think of something for their Use and Benefit; being content, for the Sake of some few, by whom possibly this may meet with a kind Reception, to expose my self to the Censure and Contempt of the rude Multitude, who are never wanting in their hard Censures and bitter Reproaches, even against those who mean them nothing but Good.

And many there are in these Days, who like the Athenians of Old, (Acts. xvii. 21.) make it their chief Delight to hear and tell some new Thing; whom yet I would advise, to be careful how they sport themselves with Things that are Serious and Sacred, lest they should laugh themselves into their own Destruction; for whom methinks, I could, by Divine Assistance, willingly lay down my Life, would it avail any Thing towards their Eternal Happiness; whom now I most earnestly recommend to the Favour and Protection of God, and the Word of His Grace; humbly beseeching the Almighty, to enlighten their Minds, by His Divine Spirit, and daily improve them in the same, more and more, until they come to His everlasting Kingdom: Which are the humble Desires and most earnest Prayers of

PHILOMATHES PHILAETHES.

APPENDIX: Or, CONCLUSION.

BY this *Appendix*, I mean to address myself particularly to the Minors of the Age; how fruitless and ineffectual the Attempt may be esteem'd to hope for Audience from them, I know not; yet how dispis'd and contemptible soever Youth are, I cannot think that they are altogether so vain in themselves, or so deaf to all good and sober Counsel, exhorting to Things serious, as some would represent them to be, who stigmatize them with the Names of Fools and Idiots: On the contrary; I think it easier to make a Young Idiot a Saint, than an old Sinner: But, placing the Difficulty upon an equal Level; as I have before address'd myself to the former, *how much to their Benefit, God knows*; so here also, I willingly turn to the latter; who, although I should be entirely frustrated in my intended Love towards them, yet shall they know that they have a *Brother* who is tenderly concern'd for their present and eternal Happiness.

O YOUTH! Youth, *Youth*: Who calls? Hear, be content, *I pray you*, to leave your *Toys*, your *Folly*, and *Foppery* for a while, and come hither: Behold, we come: What say you? Hear me, with Patience, I'll tell you, and after that use your Pleasure: We do hear, say on: Would you be Great and Happy? Yes: Then follow my Advice, and you will attain it: We desire to Obey.

First then, Learn to know thyself, for this is the principal and most excellent Part of Knowledge and without which, all other is of but little Value; this will teach you Wisdom and Prudence, the only Acquisitions of making you Great and Happy: Learn therefore to know thyself, by rightly considering Human Nature.

Man, is the most helpless and depen-

dant of all Creatures, and either the most Happy or Miserable of all the Creation: Nature has provided irrational Animals with Cloathing natural to themselves; the Beasts of the Field have Hair, the Birds of the Air have Feathers, and the Fish of the Sea have Scales; and also so speedily hastens them to such Maturity as that they are able presently to provide for themselves: But Man, alas! poor, feeble Man comes into the World naked, and altogether helpless and indigent, and must be fed and cloathed by others, or else he dies; thus he continues a long Time expos'd to many Dangers and Calamities, entirely helpless and dependant, before he is able to assist himself: He begins Life with Crying and Tears, denoting that *He is born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards*: He comes into the World with Pains; enters upon Life with Tears; is nursed up with Fears; lives in Cares; and dies with Groans; his first Voice moves Compassion, his last commands Grief: He is few of Days, and full of Trouble; Lord! what is Man! Originally, vile Dust and Ashes; ingendered in Sin; brought forth with Sorrow; helpless in his Infancy; wild, and naturally prone to Vanity in his Youth; disquieted with many Cares in his Manhood; decrepit in his Old Age, and from thence falls back again into the Infirmities of Childhood: Lord, what is Man that thou hast such Regard unto him! Man is like a Thing of Nought, his Time passeth away like a Shadow: He is born; lives; grows old; dies; thus is the Race of Man; alas! how swift! In the mean while great Things are expected from him, and he is distinguish'd and made superior to the Rest of the Creation, by the noble Character *Reason*; which, according as it is apply'd, either prefers him infinitely above, or depresses

depresses him as much below the Beasts that perish ; they die and are no more, but Man's going hence is either to Eternal Happiness or Misery.

Wherefore, O Youth, would you be Happy ? I pray thee then know thy self, and seek what is best for thee, which is thy greatest Wisdom : Comethen ! Follow me, I will lead you the Way to be Happy and Honourable by being Good. Consider now the End of your Creation, it was, *Namely ; That you might fear God and keep His Commandments*, continue here a short Time, then go Hence, and be made Eternally Happy ; thus to consider yourself is the greatest Prudence : Would you therefore be persuaded hereto, begin now to be Religious, *and remember thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth* ; which, of all other Things, will make thee most Honourable because for this Thing even God Himself will Honour you, which surely is the supreme of all Honour : This will make you prudent in your Conduct and Behaviour, and enable you the better to perform the necessary Affairs of Human Life, how great soever they be : Be not deceived therefore I beseech you by the gaudy alluring Temptations of Vice, but remember the deadly Sting that lies conceal'd in its Embraces ; and what Pleasure is there in the most delicious Honey, if it poisons those that eat it ? How beautiful soever Vice appears to the Eye, yet its Pleasures are Gall and Wormwood to the Soul ; while the Beauties of Religion, *like a valuable Treasure, or the precious Stones of the Earth*, lies more conceal'd, and must be obtain'd by much Labour and Diligence, in using the Means of Grace, with frequent Intercourse with God, thro' Christ ; by which being sound, it yields more Joy and Satisfaction than the whole World it self can give, and will end in everlasting Bliss hereafter : *Rejoice, O young Man in thy Youth, and let thine Heart cheer thee while thou art yet Young ; and and walk in the Ways that Delight thee, and in the Sight of thine Eyes ; take thy*

fill of Pleasure, eat, drink, and be merry : This is the Voice of Sin, enticing you to its Embraces, and alluring you thereto by many and various Temptations presented to your View : But Conscience and Prudence replies ; *Remember, O young Man, that for all these Things God will bring thee into Judgment, and condemn thee for ever* : And will you purchase momentary Pleasure at the Expence of everlasting Pain ? Will you relinquish a Crown of Immortality, for the sake of enjoying the Pleasures of Sin for a Season ? O don't be so unwise I beseech you, be advis'd by a Friend and a Brother, who longs for nothing more than your Happiness : And do you yet think Religion an improper Consideration for your tender Years ? Is it because you imagine it will deprive you of the Pleasures of Life ? Believe me, O dear Youth, you are very unhappily mistaken ; for on the contrary, it very greatly adds to Pleasure, and makes needful Recreation a necessary Ingredient to Life ; it forbids only an Excess herein, as being prejudicial to Human Nature, which Reason also prohibits : Wherein then I beseech you, is Religion injurious to your Happiness ? On the contrary it naturally tends to promote and improve it ; nay, it is in its self the greatest Happiness, and most superlative Pleasure, *For her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace* : But perhaps you will say, *It is difficult* : It is so, but not half so difficult as Sin ; the Yoke of Sin is infinitely heavier ; nay, it is this alone that makes the other unpleasant ; cast Sin away, and the Difficulty of Religion will be remov'd : But how burdensome soever it may seem to be, yet it must be endur'd, or else thou art lost and undone for ever : Therefore delay the Time no longer, but begin now, for the sooner thou beginnest, the lighter will be the Burden, and the easier the Difficulty will be remov'd, of which if thou complainest now, it will be very greatly increas'd by delaying the Time : Remember we are not Masters of our own Time, we can't command

command a Day to ourselves, neither can we Repent or be Happy without Grace, which if rejected when offered, may be lost for ever; *but now is the acceptable Time*, behold, *now is the Day of Salvation*: Miserable is their Madness, and in dead Things their Hope, who postpone this Great Work, this one Thing most necessary to their Death-Bed, or Old Age; this is to hazard their immortal Interest at the Chance of a Die that has ten thousand Odds against them; how do they know whether they shall live to be Old? Or, if they do, whether they shall have Time to repent? Or, if they have Time, whether they shall have Grace sufficient hereto? Or, can we suppose that God will accept the Service of our old decrepit Age, when we have spent our Strength and Vigour in the Devil's Drudgery? Offer it now to an earthly Prince, will he accept thereof, or be pleased with thy Person? How much less can we suppose that God will, against whom we have rebelled from our Youth up: Surely then, the Weakness and Folly of those can't be too much exploded nor lamented, who depend so much upon Old Age, or a Death-Bed Repentance; and imagine that a few vain Sighs or Groans, Tears or Promises, will then be sufficient to atone for a whole Life's sinning! No, we are commanded to *work out our Salvation, and labour to enter into Life*; but their Days of Labour are past, and now they can no longer Work; and what then must they do? alas! without God's infinite Mercy they are lost and undone for ever. See now therefore, O Youth, thy great Advantage in having Time and Strength to Work; consider the great Benefit and Necessity of it, and no longer delay it; but cast away now thy Burden of Sin, and Religion will be pleasant, and thy Life happy: To this End therefore I earnestly recommend to your Observation the following Particulars.

1st. Be always careful to avoid the least Solicitations to Sin; there is nothing more dangerous than Curiosities in

Things unlawful; consider how great a Fire a little Spark kindles, even so one small Sin draws on to a greater, and will quickly plunge thee into that Crime which ever after will be a Grief and Disgrace to thee all thy Days: Take Heed therefore not to indulge thyself in the Extremity of Things lawful, for then thou art upon the Borders of Sin, and how easy it is to plunge him into the River which walks upon its Brink, thou knowest very well: So from the Borders of Things Innocent, the next Step makes thee Criminal, and plunges thee into the horrible Gulf of Iniquity, and where art thou then! How many have been, and still are lost and undone for ever by this Means! Yea, how many Youths have been seen of noble Geniuses, fine Parts and good Nature, in all Respects very promising to make great and good Men, useful Members to Society, a Joy to their Parents, a Pleasure to their Friends, and a Happiness to themselves; but in a few Years Time, alas! what an unhappy Change is made: Their Parents are in Tears, their Friends amaz'd, and themselves in Destruction; Vice has deceiv'd them, and Sin hath led them to Ruin: Wherefore, O Youth, be perswaded to observe what is here advis'd, and keep thee from Sin.

2^{dly}. To this End, be carefully diligent in the Practice of Piety, which is the sole Preservative against Vice and Corruption; neglect not your Prayers Morning and Evening, as advis'd in the former Part of this Book: Read the Holy Scriptures frequently and carefully; concerning the Usefulness and Excellency of which something has been said in the foregoing Pages.

3^{dly}. Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it Holy, and carefully attend the Worship of God: But bring no Dogs with you to Church; those Christians surely don't consider where they are a going, when they bring Dogs with them to the Assembly of Divine Worship, disturbing the Congregation by their Noise

Noise and Clamour : Be thou careful, I say, of this scandalous Thing, which all ought to be advis'd against as indecent : And being entered into the House of God, compose your Mind for the due Performance of the ensuing Devotion by serious Meditation, and the following, or some other Prayer.

O God merciful Father, the Giver of all good Gifts, I give thee humble Thanks for all thy Mercies and Favours bestowed upon me from Time to Time ; particularly that thou hast called me to be a Member of thy Church Temporal, and hast at this Time admitted me into the same : Grant, O Lord, I beseech thee, that whatsoever good Thing I may hear with my outward Ears, it may be so grafted into my Heart, as daily to produce in me the Fruits of good Living ; that leaving thy Church Militant, I may hereafter be made a Member of thy Church Triumphant, through the Merits and Intercession of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Neither ought you to leave the House of God without returning Praise to him, in Words expressive of your Thankfulness for the Favour then receiv'd, in which you may enlarge or forbear, as Occasion requires.

Concerning your Behaviour at entering into the House of God, and while there, what is before-mention'd may suffice, which is recommended to you carefully to observe what is there advis'd.

4thly. With all thy Might, seek to promote the Honour of God, and the Happiness of thy Fellow Creatures, both by Example and Precept, and strive for the Truth unto Death, and God will assist thee : But take Heed that your Zeal be according to Knowledge ; for there is nothing more destructive to Piety, Unity, and Love, than an ignorant rash Zeal : Hence it is, that so many bitter Quarrels and Animosities arise among Christians, casting about Firebrands, Arrows, and Death at each other, censuring and condemning one

another as *Reprobates* : And while each Party seeks to promote Christianity, by pleading for their own Opinions, they take the most effectual Way to ruin and destroy it : An ignorant Zeal is of a raging, furious, persecuting Nature, and acts by Power and Force, against all Opposition ; it is implacable against all who differ in Opinion, censuring and condemning them as *Reprobates*, Enemies to God, and unfit to live upon the Earth, and wants only Power to destroy and put them to Death ; its Arms are, Fire and Sword, Slander and Defamation : But a Zeal according to Knowledge, viz. A true Christian Zeal, is that which operates by a loving, meek, compassionate Spirit ; whose Arms are, Prayer, Love, and Truth : It is always zealous for God's Honour and the Happiness of Mankind, but seeks to promote it, not by Force and Violence, but by Prayer, Intreaty, and Diligence in the Work of the Lord, and is always cautious of determining any Thing concerning another's Condition, of what Religion soever they be ; but prays earnestly for all, that God's Grace may be known upon Earth, and his saving Mercy unto all Nations : It is willing to do Good to all, and is grieved at nothing more than Sin, which it always zealously opposes with the uttermost Vigour by the Arms of the Spirit, convincing the Sinner of the Error of his Ways, by courteous Behaviour, Intreaty, and persuasive Arguments, founded upon Reason and Truth, thereby shewing him the Nature and Danger of his Sin.

Thus you see the great Difference between an ignorant, and a true Zeal : They both are greatly mov'd for God's Honour, both zealously affected in promoting it, but take direct contrary Means to effect it : The One passes Judgment against all Opposers, pronouncing them to be in a State of Damnation : But the Other refers all Judgment to God, and prays for its Persecutors : The One seeks to promote Religion by Force and Violence ; but the Other, by Love and Humanity. A lively Exam-

ple of which we have in *St. Paul*: View him before his Conversion, and he breathes nothing but Threatnings and Slaughter against all Opposers, and thought he did God good Service by putting them to *Fire and Sword*: Thus dealt he against the Christians, *I being exceeding zealous*, says he, *punished them oft in every Synagogue; compelled them to blaspheme, and persecuted them even to strange Cities*: But after his Conversion to Christianity, Oh! what an amazing Change was here? The Spirit of Zeal was the same, but acted by quite different Means: He who before could bear no Opposition; Now, says he, *being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; and being defamed, we intreat*! He who before used nothing but Force and Violence against all Opposers, now seeks to win them by *Meekness, Gentleness, and Love*, and willingly submits to all Things, that he might by *all Means save some*. Thus lovely is a true Christian Zeal; and such must yours be, or it will be a Zeal not according to Knowledge, or the Spirit of the Gospel.

5thly. Be always careful not to engage yourself so far in any Business, as may clash with your Eternal Interest; an Excess must always be avoided, as making even the most lawful and necessary Thing sinful: Thus, so to labour as to forget to pray is sinful; and so to pray as to forget to labour is also sinful: In like manner, so to eat as to forget Temperance, is criminal; and so to use Moderation as to neglect necessary Food is also criminal: And so in all other Respects of Life, an Excess must always be avoided as sinful and dangerous.

6thly. Be careful always so to set your Affections upon the Things of this Life, as upon Things of a precarious and uncertain Duration, and promise to yourself the Certainty of nothing; that how soever Things may happen contrary to your liking, it may rather be esteem'd a common Accident than a Disappointment; so shall it be more tolerably endured by you; and by proper Reflection, may become serviceable to you also.

7thly. Undertake no Business, without first duly considering the End, and seek to God for a Blessing; always returning Thanks for Mercies receiv'd; and be careful to use Grace before and after Meat, as before advis'd.

8thly. Be ready to assist all to the uttermost of your Power; doing to them as you would be dealt by yourself; and learn to return Good for Evil, ever abhorring Defamation and Reproach as utterly Unchristian, how Just soever your Cause may be thereto.

9thly. Be Civil and Courteous to all, and endeavour rather to merit Esteem than desire it, always behaving yourself so as that whatsoever Slander and Defamation may be cast upon you, it may be undeserved; and carefully avoid ill Company and Idleness; which are *Satan's* Engines, whereby he seeks to tempt unwary Minds to Sin, and bring them to Ruin.

10thly. In Disputations about indifferent Things, it is better to acquiesce, or be silent, than to hold an Argument of Contention; especially with Arbitrary Persons, who will have Things their own Way how contrary soever to Truth or Reason: And farther, I would earnestly desire you to have a strict Regard over your Words, and keep thy Heart with all Diligence, for out of it are the Issues of Life: We can't but much admire at the great Folly of those who hope God will pardon their vile Oaths and Imprecations because they were in a Passion, or provoked thereto. whereas there is nothing more vain, idle, and dangerous, than such a Presumption; are they willing to be us'd so themselves by their own Servants? By whom being abus'd and reproach'd, Do they esteem it a sufficient Excuse for them, to say, they were in a Passion, or provok'd to what they did? No, verily; they are thought truly deserving of Punishment for that Passion; and he who murders a Man being thus out of his Senses, is judged justly worthy of Death when he is sober; how then can we suppose that God will excuse that in us, which we condemn

condemn in each other ? But some there are, who presently recal their rash Speaking, with *God forgive me* ; and then they think all is well, their Sin is pardon'd ! As though the great God was pleas'd with empty Words and Blasts of Wind, and for the sake thereof, would Pardon Sins that require true Contrition, Sorrow of Heart, and Reformation : Remember that nothing but the Blood of Jesus can expiate Sin, be thou therefore always careful of such Passion as is criminal, or of Words that are sinful, remembring, *That by thy Words thou shalt be either justify'd or condemn'd, but labour to let your Conversation be according to the Gospel of Christ, and walk as becometh a Christian.*

11thly. Before thy Elders and Superiors, let thy Words be few, comprehensive, and well timed ; for otherwise they will not be heard, though never so much to the Purpose ; and be careful of being too hasty in answering, *Yes*, or *No*, to what is propos'd or asked, before you understand it ; neither is it prudent to speak any Thing but what is the real Truth ; lest afterwards, you be oblig'd with Shame to recede from what you said.

12thly, and Lastly. In Matters of Difficulty, and Need require, have Recourse to a Friend ; but be careful whom you trust as such, and get thee not to the Wicked ; he is no Friend to himself, and therefore he can be none to thee ; but go to the righteous Man, whom thou knowest to keep the *Commandments*, and will sorrow with thee in thy Distress, and readily assist thee in thy Necessity ; yet be not too hasty to believe every One to be your Friend who professes himself to be such, for many have been miserably deceiv'd hereby to their own Ruin : He who is difficult, or makes long Delays in performing Things promis'd or request'd, especially when they require neither much Time or Expence, let his Pretences of Friendship towards you be what they will, yet be well assur'd that they are vain and worthless, therefore regard them not : Nei-

ther is that Advice to be much esteem'd which is given Arbitrarily, viz. Not permitting you to Judge of its Reasonableness, but prophesying Injury upon its being refused ; the Signs are, *Must, Shall, or Would, viz.* You *must* do so and so, or you'll do amiss : You *shall* follow my Advice, or you'll not prosper : I *would* have you consider me as a Friend, and not trouble yourself about such and such a Thing, but observe my Counsels, and it will be well for you. This, *I say*, is not to give Advice, but arbitrarily to impose a Command, and therefore ought no otherwise to be esteem'd, than the Words of a Stranger upon good Examination, appears to be useful or not : But he only gives true friendly Advice, which submits it to the Judgment and Reason of the Person advis'd for his Approbation, and willingly hears any Objections that may be offer'd against it ; but neither ought you so implicitly to follow any Advice whatsoever, without first well considering it ; and how truly soever given and earnestly press'd, dissuading from your Purpose, yet if the Reasons of your Mind (*which is wont to tell a Man more than seven Counsellors*) declare for the Undertaking in View, and the Consequence be such as warrants your Proceeding, as having a Tendency to promote the Honour of God, the Good of your *Fellow Creatures*, and your *own Happiness* in Christ, *through Grace* ; *I say*, in such Cases, it is much more prudent for a Person to follow the Dictates of his own Mind, than to hearken to the Advice of others, and pursue his Undertaking with all Diligence and Care, seeking daily Direction and Assistance from God, by whose Divine Spirit he is mov'd to what he does ; neither ought he to be discourag'd at any Difficulty that may attend it : There is nothing valuable to be obtain'd without much Labour and Industry ; neither are we to consult our own Ease and Safety so much as the Honour of God, and the Good of our *Fellow Creatures* : Doubtless Advice, when given thro' true Love and sincere Affections, is always deserving Respect

Respect for its kind Intention ; but forasmuch as it is impossible for the Adviser to know what God has put in the Heart of the Advis'd to do, no Friend ought therefore to be too pressing in soliciting him to recede from his Undertaking, when it is perceiv'd he is very unwillingly drawn from it ; lest perhaps such Advice be found to strive against God, and the Good of the Publick, which ought always to be of far greater Concern to us than our own Interest, or private Enjoyments. St. Peter, doubtless thought he gave great Testimony of his Love to Christ, by offering to defend him against the approaching bitter Sufferings, he had then declar'd he should shortly suffer at *Jerusalem* ; *Be it far from thee, Lord*, says he, *this shall not be unto thee* : Which Words how kindly soever intended, yet being improper, and too earnestly press'd, met with a severe Rebuke, *Get thee behind me Satan*, says Christ, *thou art an Offence unto me ; for thou savourest not the Things that by of God, but those that be of Men*, S. Mat. xvi. 22, 23. Likewise also, St. Paul complains much of the too pressing Solicitations he met with, to recede from going to *Jerusalem*, because of the Afflictions that there awaited him ; *What mean ye to weep*, says he, *and to brake mine Heart ; for I am ready, not only to be bound, but also to suffer Death at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus*, Acts xxi. 13. Friends therefore would do well from hence to consider, that it is not always from a Spirit of Opposition or Disrespect, that their Advice is sometimes refus'd, how well soever design'd or earnestly press'd ; the Undertaking in View is for the Honour of God, and the Good of Mankind, and therefore must not be omitted. These Things being remark'd, what remains, O Youth, but that you carefully reflect upon and consider them ; which with what has before been advis'd, in the preceeding Part hereof, is earnestly re-

commended to your Regard, beseeching you carefully to observe and practice them ; and then, you will most assuredly find what I promis'd to be true, viz. *Of becoming Great and Honourable* ; for there is no Greatness, like being Good ; and no Honour, like God's Esteem : Is the Attendant of an Earthly Prince Honourable ? How much more the Servant of the Living God ? Does that Office reflect Honour upon a Man, and bespeak him Noble and Great, that is employ'd about Earthly Kings ? How infinitely greater and more noble must he be, who is employ'd in Offices relating to the *King of Kings*, and *Lord of Lords* ? Is it accounted a great Favour and Happiness to be esteem'd by a Temporal Prince, and admitted into his Court ? How unspeakably greater and more noble is that Favour and Happiness, of being esteem'd by the immortal God, and admitted into his heavenly Court ! wherein are Joys larger than can be conceiv'd, and as lasting as the Soul.

Thus have I shewn you the Way, of being *Great, Honourable*, and *Noble*, by being *Good* ; and beseech you no longer to be a Child, by rejecting what is here advis'd, but now become a Man, by observing it, and follow that which will make you a *Saint* ; which glorious Happiness, as I earnestly long for myself, so do heartily wish it to thee : And may God, the Great and Good God, in the Knowledge of whom, all Happiness consists, so enlighten our Minds by his Divine Grace, and assist us with his Holy Spirit, as that we may daily improve in the Knowledge and Practice of those Things, as may procure us this inestimable Felicity, and admit us into his eternal Kingdom, where is Fulness of Joy and Pleasure for evermore : This is the humble Request and hearty Prayer of your *Servant in Christ*, and *Brother in the Lord* ; beseeching you to join with me herein, by the hearty Assent of, *Amen*.

F I N I S.

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